

THE
ORATION AND POEM

DELIVERED BEFORE

“The Sons of Rhode Island”

IN NEW YORK,

ON THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY,

May 29th, 1863.

AN ORATION
ON THE
ANNALS OF RHODE ISLAND

AND
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,

BY THE
REV. FRANCIS VINTON, D.D.,

AND
A RHYME
OF
RHODE ISLAND AND THE TIMES,

BY
GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, Esq.,

DELIVERED BEFORE
THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND IN NEW YORK,
MAY 29, 1863.



NEW YORK:
PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION,
BY C. A. ALVORD.
1863.

At a Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND, held pursuant to the call of the President and Vice-President, at the Directors' Room of the American Exchange Bank (in the City of New York), on Wednesday the third day of June, 1863, Mr. ENGS offered the following RESOLUTION:

RESOLVED, that the thanks of this Committee be presented to the Rev. Dr. VINTON for the eloquent Oration, and to GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, Esq., for the excellent Poem delivered by them respectively, on the occasion of the Anniversary of this Association, and that they be solicited to furnish copies of the same to this Committee for publication.

The question having been put by the Recording Secretary, at the request of the President, the same was unanimously adopted.

The President responded to the vote of thanks in a few well-chosen and interesting remarks, and gave his consent to the request of the Committee with the proviso that he should retain the Oration for the present.

The Corresponding Secretary also courteously acknowledged the request of the Committee; but hesitated in granting it, on account of what he was pleased to call the transitory nature of his Poem, and because he had written it hastily, for a particular occasion, and with no reference to its permanent preservation.

It having been suggested, that this might be explained in a note, Mr. Curtis kindly consented to the request of the Committee.

Upon motion of Mr. Engs,

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Arrangements for the Anniversary Celebration, have charge of the publication of the Oration and Poem, with power.

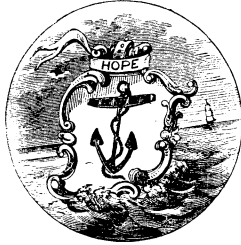
WILLIAM J. HOPPIN, *Recording Secretary.*

[Extract from the Minutes.]

Constitution of the Sons of Rhode Island.

It being desirable that Rhode Islanders, and the descendants of Rhode Islanders, residing in New York and its vicinity, should be associated for the cultivation of social intercourse, the promotion of mutual good-will and fellowship, the enlargement of their acquaintance with and knowledge of each other, and for the exercise of beneficence towards needy Rhode Islanders, it is agreed that :

1. The name of the Association shall be "THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND."
2. The officers of the Association shall be an Executive Committee of thirteen; the officers of which—namely, the President, the Vice-President, the Treasurer, and the Secretaries—shall be elected annually by the Committee, and shall hold the same offices in the Association. The Executive Committee shall have power to make By-laws for their government and that of the Association.
3. The election of the Executive Committee shall be held on the day of the Annual Meeting, namely, the twenty-ninth day of May, in each year—that being the Anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States by the State of Rhode Island; and, in the event of such day being Sunday, the election shall be held on the succeeding business day. Vacancies occurring during the current year, may be filled by the Committee.
4. Any person who shall have been a Citizen of Rhode Island, or who is the descendant of a Citizen, may become a Member of this Association, on application to the Executive Committee and assenting to, and subscribing these articles; paying to the Treasurer an Initiation Fee of Three Dollars and such Annual Dues thereafter, not exceeding One Dollar, as the Executive Committee may determine. Honorary Members may be admitted by a vote of the majority of the Committee, or of the Association.
5. The President and Vice-President *may*, in their discretion, or, on the application of three Members of the Committee, *shall* call a meeting of the Committee or of the Association, notice thereof being published in at least two of the daily papers of the city.
6. The Executive Committee is authorized, by a vote of two-thirds of its Members, to cause this Association to be incorporated under the General Laws of this State relating to Benevolent Societies, or under Special Charter, at its discretion.
7. These Articles may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of all the Members present at any meeting, provided that notice of such alteration and amendment shall have been given at the meeting next previous thereto.



Executive Committee.

1863-4.

REV. FRANCIS VINTON, D.D., PRESIDENT.
JOHN E. WILLIAMS, VICE-PRESIDENT.
BENJAMIN G. ARNOLD, TREASURER.
GEORGE WM. CURTIS, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.
WILLIAM J. HOPPIN, RECORDING SECRETARY.

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| GEORGE S. COE, | PHILIP W. ENGS, |
| RANDALL H. GREENE, | JOHN H. ORMSBEE, |
| CHARLES CONGDON, | BENJAMIN COZZENS. |

COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, AND
ALSO FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE ORATION AND POEM:

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| MR. KNIGHT, | MR. ARNOLD, |
| MR. ORMSBEE, | MR. HOPPIN. |

Annals of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

THE ORATION

SPOKEN ON THE

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND IN NEW YORK,

MAY 29, 1863:

BEING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION BY RHODE ISLAND
OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES IN 1790,

AND ALSO (PROBABLY),

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LANDING OF ROGER WILLIAMS OR THE
SETTLEMENT OF "PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN
NEW ENGLAND" IN 1636.

BY

FRANCIS VINTON, D.D.,

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF TRINITY CHURCH, NEW YORK, AND PRESIDENT OF
THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND.

Advertisement to the Reader.

IN publishing this contribution to the Annals of my native State, at the request of the Sons of Rhode Island in New York, I cannot forbear to make public my acknowledgments to Mr. Henry T. Drowne, my fellow-statesman, whose patient and loving interest in whatever concerns the history and the welfare of Rhode Island, as well as his cherished personal friendship, has furnished excellence to my manuscript (which he took pains to copy) for the printer's elegant skill. He has likewise so enriched this pamphlet, by his exact erudition, with references to several authentic sources, as to entitle these "Annals" to the dignity of History, and to the confidence of the future scholar.

FRANCIS VINTON.

Trinity Church, New York, November 25, 1863.

The Oration was delivered also, by invitation
Of the Long Island Historical Society, in Brooklyn, N. Y., June 11, 1863 ;
Of the New York Historical Society, in New York, June 16, 1863 ;
Of the citizens of Providence, R. I., in Roger Williams Hall, June 26, 1863 ;
Of the Redwood Library Association, in Newport, R. I., in Aquidneck Hall,
June 30, 1863.

THE ORATION.

RHODE ISLAND, the smallest of the United States, was the cradle of the civilization of the nineteenth century. This is a bold statement, as well as lofty praise. And yet it is not arrogant in the sons of Rhode Island to repeat what European Philosophers* have asserted, and the truth of history confirms.

Professor Gervinus,† in his recent "Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century," says that "Roger Williams founded, in 1636, a small new society in Rhode Island, upon the principles of entire liberty of conscience, and the uncontrolled powers of the majority in secular concerns. The theories of freedom in Church and State, taught in the schools of philosophy in Europe, were here brought into practice in the government of a small community. It was prophesied that the democratic attempts to obtain universal suffrage, a general elective franchise, annual parliaments and entire religious freedom would be of short duration. But these institutions" (the foundations of which were laid in Rhode Island), "have not only maintained themselves in their birthplace, but have spread over the whole Union. They have superseded the aristocratic commencements of South Carolina and of New York, the high-church party of Virginia, the theocracy of Massachusetts, and the monarchy throughout America; they have given laws to one quarter of the globe, and, dreaded for their moral influence,

* See NOTE I.—Letter of John Milton.

† Dr. G. G. Gervinus, of Heidelberg, whose "Commentaries on Shakspeare's Writings" are highly esteemed in Europe and America.

they stand in the background of every democratic struggle in Europe."*

Des Cartes founded modern philosophy on the method of free reflection. But, two years before Des Cartes startled Europe with his discussions on freethinking, Roger Williams asserted the intellectual liberty of man and the freedom of the conscience. Des Cartes derived his conclusions from *doubt* of Divine Revelation: Roger Williams learned his truths from *faith* in God's written Word. The unbelieving philosopher exalted the speculations of human thought; the humble Christian student yielded lowly reverence to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Yet, both the Divine and the Philosopher, almost simultaneously, in remote parts of the world, without collusion or conference, enunciated the right of conscience "to obey God rather than men." This was the echo of the voice of apostles and martyrs bursting from the caverns of the dark ages, where the arrogance of a corrupt Church, conspiring with ignorance and superstition, had choked the soul and suppressed its breathings.

Acknowledging, as we do, the Providence of God over the affairs of the world, and seeing His hand in the progress of civilization, it is interesting and instructive to observe the instruments which He employs, often of diverse materials and opposite characters, in accomplishing His purpose.

In the early years of the seventeenth century, Germany was the battle-field for all Europe in the wars for Religion; Holland was torn by infuriate factions; France was arming for a struggle with bigotry; England was gasping under the load of intolerance. It was the second era of the Reformation, when the emancipated mind was resisting the attempts of the usurper to re-enslave it. It was the after-birth of the new civilization. Europe demanded one course of treatment, America another, to produce sound health. In the Old Countries, institutions were

* Quoted from "An Account of the Writings of Roger Williams,"* by R. A. Guild, Librarian of Brown University.

* The original copy of "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives," by Roger Williams, is in the library of John Carter Brown, Esq., of Providence, and was recently reprinted by Sidney S. Rider, of that city.

to be modified; in the New Country, institutions were to be created. And while the philosopher, living in a region of thought far above that by which he is surrounded, and remote from the strife of common minds, might, without suspicion of party proclivities, announce the principle which was to reform society and would be accepted by the struggling partisans; at the same time, the Christian Colonist,* about to found a State, and living amidst the real hardships of savage life, might put in practice the same principle, as the leaven of a fresh Commonwealth, and rear a fabric of society that should become a living pattern to the nations of the world. Des Cartes would have been as much out of place in the wilds of New England, as Roger Williams would have been out of place among the *savans* of Holland and France. While, therefore, the battle of the soul's freedom was being *fought* in Europe, the Providence of God was *establishing* the freedom of the soul in Rhode Island.

It will require an effort in us, who have been familiar with the civilization of a century, to appreciate the full value of our freedom, and to do just honor to those who gained it for us. The boy who rides on the railway car, at the speed of thirty miles an hour, and reads the telegraphic news from California, of the date of yesterday, imagines that these things have been so always. The history of Commerce will inform him how slow and painful have been the steps of improvement, and what a debt he owes to his fathers for their gradual and triumphant experiments. So the civilization of the nineteenth century owes to the Cartesian school of philosophy, and to the lively democratic experiments of Rhode Island men, the familiar blessings of toleration and liberty of thought, which we prize as our birthright.

I trust that it will not be considered presumptuous, therefore, nor in any measure self-complacent, while we talk of Rhode Island's greatness.

* Prof. William Gammell's *Life of Roger Williams*,—*Sparks' American Biography*, vol. xiv., pp. 206, 207. Tuckerman's *Biographical Essays*,—"Roger Williams, the Tolerant Colonist," pp. 181-190. Knowles' *Memoirs of Roger Williams*, pp. 389, 435-437.

The antiquity of Rhode Island annals, probably exceeds that of any other portion of our country. You will find them in the Scandinavian libraries of Iceland and Sweden, in the narrative of the voyages of the Northmen, before Columbus discovered America. Its most ancient European name is "Vinland," and its climate is described just as the modern meteorologist describes it, or as the senses of the throngs of modern visitors enjoy it.

There stands the mysterious "OLD MILL" in Newport, set up on shafts, or columns, in the architecture of the eleventh century, a fireplace in it, and window-openings outlooking towards the sea, and in the direction of Seaconnet and Conanicut.

The antiquaries of Stockholm and Copenhagen say, with confidence, that the Northmen built it, after the pattern of their old coast-towers, both as a fortress and a granary, wherein the voyagers deposited the reserve supplies, and left a garrison, while they prosecuted their explorations. The windows for the lookout of the sentinels, the fireplace for cooking of provisions, and the columns to lift the garrison and stores beyond the reach of the predatory savages, all touch the question and seem to confirm the theory.

Governor Benedict Arnold, in his last Will,* styles the edifice his "Mill." And, doubtless, he used it for a windmill; for the location of a tower for observation, and a windmill for grinding corn, is the spot highest in the neighborhood; and the settlers of Aquidneck, in 1638, probably found the structure for their windmill already reared. For, if *they* built it, why should they build it of stones? Why lift it up on shafts? Why open it towards the sea, and not landward? Why put a fireplace in it? These questions the Archæological Society of Norway and Sweden have answered, by affirming that the Northmen were the architects.

Prof. Rafn (in the "Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord," for 1838-1839), says: "From such character-

* Recorded in the Town Clerk's office, Newport, R. I., p. 348, No. 5, Probate Records.

istics as remain, we can scarcely form any other inference than one, in which I am persuaded that all who are familiar with old Northern Architecture will concur, *that this building was erected at a period decidedly not later than the twelfth century.*"

Nor is the old mill at Newport the only token of the antiquity of Rhode Island annals.* There are the remains of the civilization of the Middle Ages in "the Skeleton in Armor," which was dug up at Fall River a few years ago (1850), clad in the mail of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, broken and corroded by time. This discovery inspired Longfellow, as you know, to compose the ballad suggested to him "while riding on the sea-shore at Newport," full of poetic fire and historic probability :

"THE SKELETON IN ARMOR."

"Speak ! speak ! thou fearful guest !
 Who, with thy hollow breast,
 Still in rude armor drest,
 Comest to daunt me !
 Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
 But with thy fleshless palms
 Stretched, as if asking alms,
 Why dost thou haunt me ?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
 Pale flashes seem to rise,
 As when the Northern skies
 Gleam in December ;
 And, like the waters flow
 Under December's snow,
 Came a dull voice of woe
 From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old !
 My deeds, though manifold,
 No Skald in song has told,
 No Saga taught thee !
 * * * * *

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
 Yielding, yet half afraid,
 And in the forest's shade
 Our vows were plighted.
 * * * * *

* I do not mention the inscription on Dighton Rock, which is not yet satisfactorily deciphered.

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden;
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

* * * * *

"Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another."

And, as there is much of romantic interest in the misty and uncertain story of Rhode Island, which the transatlantic Antiquarian and the American Poet would embalm, in history and in song, so Rhode Island's Annals of Indian Diplomacy and Indian Wars are full of examples of wisdom, of kindness, of bravery, and of fortitude, to inspire the loftiest strains of poetry and to challenge the eulogiums of the historic pen.

Mount Hope was the seat of the royal court of Massasoit, and his son Metacomet, or Pometacom,* or Metacom, known and named by the English as King Philip.

"When Roger Williams left Salem to obtain permission from the Indians to settle at Seekonk," says Professor Elton, "it appears that he made his way through the desolate wilderness to Ousamequin, or Massasoit, the Sachem of the Pokanokets, who resided at Mount Hope, near the present town of Bristol, Rhode Island. This famous Chief occupied the country, north from Mount Hope, as far as Charles River."† He and his son Pom-

* Drake's Book of the Indians,—Life of King Philip, book iii., chap. ii., p. 13.

† Elton's Life of Roger Williams, p. 37.

etacom gave the title deeds* of New Bedford and other towns. Massasoit† was the acknowledged sovereign of the territory which the Pilgrim Fathers settled; and the original seat of empire over Plymouth and Massachusetts was in Rhode Island.

The influence of climate on character, which political philosophers maintain, is strongly corroborated by the historic fact that Rhode Island has produced the aboriginal lords, and the greatest men, of the barbarous tribes of Indians in New England. The wisdom and power of Massasoit; the gentle courtesy of old Canonicus;‡ the discernment, the cautious confidence, the fidelity and honor of Miantinomoh;§ the far-reaching statesmanship, and the intrepid valor and fortitude of Metacomet, were characteristics of the Narragansett race, whose intelligence, virtue, and bravery, not only gave them mastery over the Indian tribes, in war and in peace, but also commanded the unwilling tribute of respect from the Puritan Pilgrims.

The Narragansetts were the victors over every tribe in Indian wars, and the tutors of Indians in the savage arts of peace. They coined the Wampum,|| both black and white—the money of the tribes—from the shells of the Rhode Island shores. They excelled in agriculture and in the manufactures. They gave the laws. While other tribes were Polygamists, they alone were Monogamists.

She who reigned over the Seaconnets, Queen Awashonks, is, both by the famous Captain Benjamin Church and by Drake, the annalists, described in glowing praise, as possessing charms and virtues belonging to high civilization.¶ She was the friend of the English, to be sure, but she was the friend and ally of King Philip also: she was faithful to her nation, yet tolerant of the foreigners settled amongst them. The remnant of her tribe remained in Little Compton.

* Drake's Indians, book ii., chap. ii., p. 26; also, book iii., chap. ii., pp. 13–15.

† R. I. Hist. Coll., vol. iii.,—Potter's Early History of Narragansett, p. 78.

‡ *Ib.*, pp. 42–47. Drake's Indians, book ii., chap. iii., pp. 47–52.

§ *Ib.*, p. 42. *Ib.*, book ii., chap. iv., pp. 59–67.

|| Hutchinson, vol. i., p. 406. Knowles' Memoir of Roger Williams, p. 88.

¶ Drake's Indians, book iii., chap. iv., p. 62. Captain Benjamin Church's Indian Wars.

Strange mutations of human fortune! Within this present year, the railway from Newport to Fall River has required excavations through the burial places of those famous Narragansetts; and the rude spades of Irish laborers have laid bare the graves, and skeletons, and utensils, and ornaments of the Indians to the gaze of the stolid and curious—of the tourist and the antiquarian. Two years ago, in 1861, some antiquaries in Charleston, Rhode Island, opened the graves in “Sachem’s Burial Ground;” and in this city of New York, on this very spot, the skulls of Ninigret* and his maiden daughter, with the copper bowls and implements of the royal Wigwam (evidently manufactured by the Dutch), and the long precious chain of silver reaching from head to foot, and her gold sleeve-buttons, with other ornaments of silk and gold and wampum, that some time served to embellish her royal person; and coins, bearing date 1650, Ludovicus XIII., with other curious things, were exhibited by Rhode Island’s learned Archæologist,† and formed the topic of his instructive lecture before the Historical Society of New York in November, 1862, and will likely be deposited in the Historical Society’s Museum in Central Park. Well might our Indian Sachems exclaim, with Hamlet, to the grave-diggers of the Nineteenth Century: “To what base uses we may return! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Massasoit, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?”

Imperial Ninigret, dead, and brought to light
Has had his skull a topic for a night.

But, in a higher point of view, we rejoice that the soil of Rhode Island has surrendered her deposits to enrich the history of New York, and exemplify the trade of the Dutch settlers.

The story of King Philip’s war is too familiar to be recited. But we may say, that, for love of country and the determination to defend it; for the prowess of the Colonists, like Captain

* Potter’s Early History of Narragansett, p. 50.

† Dr. Usher Parsons’ Lecture before the N. Y. Hist. Soc., published in the Historical Magazine for February, 1863. Dr. Parsons is the last surviving commissioned officer of Perry’s flag-ship in the battle of Lake Erie.

Church, persevering to conquer; for the hardships, the valor, the self-sacrifices, the heroism, which wars of conquest and defence evince, for the incidents of hair-breadth escapes and skilful strategy, the stronghold in the swamp, the fiery assault, the ice-bridge, that bore the assailants to victory and the Indians to despair, the extermination of the Narragansetts;* these are topics for the prolonged eloquence of our Poets and Historians, not exhausted by the "Yamoyden" of Sands and Eastburn, nor by the narratives of Church and Drake, nor by the histories of Bancroft and Arnold. Alas! for the Indians! they had no literature, else the lion would have been painted as killing the man; and not man the lion. But though we may find in the contemporaneous annals, only epithets of beast and savage and devil, with cognate characteristics, yet the calm justice of later chroniclers portrays the character and exploits of the Narragansetts in colors of humanity and heroism. What loftier grandeur does history narrate than Metacomet's reply to the messenger of the Governor of Massachusetts?—"Your Governor is but a subject of King Charles, of England. I shall not treat with a subject. I shall treat of peace only with the King, my brother. When he comes, I am ready."† It is like that of the captive Porus to Alexander the Great, who, when asked, "How he would be treated," answered, "Like a king."‡

What abundant incidents in King Philip's life§ furnish the richest material for poetry, and song, and drama! His accession to the throne of Massasoit, his patriotic speeches to his young men, his masterful diplomacy with the neighboring tribes, his secret preparations for the grand uprising, his fierce encounters and undaunted perseverance when all seemed lost, his pilgrimage to the Mohawks to engage them in the war, the capture and death of his wife, and the selling of his only son

* Judge Durfee's Works,—“History of the Subjection and Extermination of the Narragansetts,” pp. 203–271.

† Drake's Indians,—Life of King Philip, book iii., chap. ii., p. 24.

‡ Plutarch's Life of Alexander.

§ Washington Irving's Sketch Book,—Philip of Pokanoket, pp. 386–407, Putnam's most elegant Artists' Edition, from Alvord's press.

(the last of the family of Massasoit) into slavery in Bermuda, his return to the desolate solitude of his seat at Mount Hope, his desperation and the pathos of his mourning, his massacre by the hand of the traitor, the quartering of his carcass at the command of the otherwise chivalrous Captain Church, and the hanging of it on four trees, and the rude spite of the Indian butcher addressing the dead body of King Philip: "You have been a very great man, and have made many a man afraid of you, but so big as you be, I will now chop your —— for you;"* and, finally, the exhibiting of his head on a gibbet, in Plymouth, for twenty years, one hand sent to Boston as a trophy, and the other scarred hand given to Alderman, the traitor who shot him, to show, "at a penny a sight," throughout the Colonies of New England;† these are copious themes for thought and for the muse.

"Even that he lived is for his conqueror's tongue,
By foes alone his death-song must be sung."‡

"The wife of Pometacom, the innocent Wootonekanuske, with her little son, fell into the hands of Captain Church," writes Drake.§ "No wonder that Philip was 'now ready to die, and that his heart was now ready to break,' as some of his traitorous men told Captain Church. All that was dear to him was swallowed up. But his only son, the future Sachem of the Narragansetts, still lived, and this most haunted his soul. Lived for what? To serve as a slave in an unknown land. Could it be otherwise than that madness should seize upon him, and despair torment him? That in his sleep he should hear the anguishing cries of Wootonekanuske and his son? But we must change the scene." And with him I pass to better spectacles in our History.

* "Fulvia, the wife of Anthony, showed her spite against Cicero by boring his tongue through with her bodkin."

† Arnold's History of the State of Rhode Island, vol. i, p. 416. Drake's Indians, —Life of King Philip, book iii., chap. ii., p. 37. Church's Indian Wars.

‡ Charles Sprague.

§ Drake's Indians, —Life of King Philip, book iii., chap. ii., p. 13.

There have been four eras in our State :

I.—ITS SETTLEMENT.

II.—ITS CHARTER.

III.—THE ADOPTION OF THE FÆDERAL CONSTITUTION.

IV.—THE DORR WAR.

I do not intend to narrate the circumstances of the settlement of our State, with which the sons of Rhode Island are familiar, further than to trace the effects of the principle of the Civil Polity on the inhabitants, whereby Rhode Islanders are “a peculiar people;” and also note the reaction of the people on the Civil Polity, which has outlived two centuries. And this discussion will comprehend the first two eras of Rhode Island.

The Charter of “Providence Plantations in New England,” obtained by Roger Williams, was signed Thursday, 14th March, 1643-4,* and was confirmed by Oliver Cromwell, March 29, 1655.† It did not include Rhode Island, but only main-land towns.

The Charter of Charles II., procured by Dr. John Clarke,‡ is dated 8th July, 1663, and includes the islands and main-land, and gives the peculiar title to “The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.” Amidst all the changes of the dynasties of Europe, and of Asia, the Charter of 1663 remained fixed. During the Colonial Period, the Revolution, the Confederation, the Adoption of the Constitution of the United States, the establishment of New States, and amidst the unsettlements of every other State Constitution, the Royal Charter of Rhode Island stood without amendment. It contained three grand principles: 1st. *The acknowledgment of Indian Titles.* 2d. *It allows Liberty of Conscience.* 3d. *It establishes Republican Government.*

* Arnold's Hist. R. I., vol. i, p. 114, *note*.

† *Ib.*, p. 255.

‡ “The original projector of the settlement on Rhode Island, in 1638; and the first regularly educated physician who ever practised in the State.”—GODDARD'S *Address on the occasion of the change in the Civil Government of Rhode Island*, May 3, 1843, p. 54.

This old Charter, granted both by Parliament and by a king, was also THE FIRST WRITTEN CONSTITUTION IN THE WORLD. The Royal Charter survived the attempts of demagogues to annul and supersede it. It was the fundamental law of the State from 1663 to May 2, 1843, when it was superseded by "the authentic act of the whole people."

As it was proclaimed at its birth as a "livelie experiment" of a pure "Democracie," with liberty of freemen to elect the freemen who should compose the State,* and with "full Libertie of Conscience in all religious concernments;" so it "particularly" orders,—before William Penn set foot in America,—"the makinge of purchases of the native Indians,"† and is the *first solemn protest of mercy and justice*‡ against the claim of the Pope as vicar of Jesus Christ, and of the Sovereigns of Europe to the control of newly discovered countries.

The principles of ABORIGINAL TITLES, of SOUL-LIBERTY, and of DEMOCRACY, which Roger Williams asserted in 1630 before the people of England; which he avowed on arriving at Boston in 1631; which he sustained amidst the bickerings of a colonial parish in Plymouth; which he asserted before the General Court of Massachusetts in 1635; which, on his banishment from Massachusetts he introduced into the primeval forests on Narragansett Bay in 1636; which he incorporated into the written bond of town-fellowship in Providence ("the earliest form of government recorded, wherein is expressly recognized the rights of conscience");§—principles which he published to the world, and defended as the birth-right of mankind; which he embodied in the Charter procured by him from Cromwell's

* "The sovereign power of all civil authority is founded in the consent of the people."—ROGER WILLIAMS' "*Bloudy Tenent*," pp. 116, 243.

† King Charles's Charter of 1663.

‡ Arnold's Hist. R. I., vol. i., chapter 4.

§ Elton's Life of Roger Williams, p. 45:

"Roger Williams justly claims the honor of having been the first legislator in the world, in its latter ages, that fully and effectually provided for and established a full, free, and absolute liberty of conscience."—STEPHEN HOPKINS, several times Governor, and a signer of the Declaration. For a complete refutation of the rival claims of Maryland, see Judge Pitman's Centennial Discourse, August 5, 1837 p. 8.

Parliament in England, in 1644; and which principles were embalmed in the Royal Charter of Charles II., in 1663,* can never be holden by the bands of death; but they are revived, and live in the Constitution of Rhode Island of 1843. On those memorable days in May (1st and 2d), in the State House at Newport, your President was the Priest who offered the prayers at the decease of the Charter and its revival in the Constitution.† There, in that most beautiful spot in Newport, where, on the 24th of November, 1663, the Colonists welcomed the arrival of "George Baxter, the most faithful and happy bringer of the Charter" (as the record quaintly reports); we, of this generation, assembled in the balmy month of May, 1843, to resign the parchment and to receive again its recorded principles in the more graceful investiture of a Constitution.

The Government of Rhode Island, under the Charter, has been eminently a government of law and order. No State has endured more heat in the strife of political parties, but no profane Uzzah has dared to lay his rude hand upon the ark of religious and political freedom in Rhode Island. The men who governed the State owned the State. The State has never interfered with religion, and religionists have been deprived of every pretext for interfering with the State. These are the grand secret causes of the prosperity, and peace, and order which the people of Rhode Island enjoyed under the Charter.

One of the early colonial documents confesses, in its old-fashioned, expressive way, that "we have long drank of the cup of as great liberties as any people that we can hear of under the whole Heaven."‡ And our most distinguished historian, Mr. Bancroft, exclaims: "It has outlived the principles of Clarendon, and the policy of Charles II. Nowhere in the world have

* "Our Charter excels all in New England, or *in the world*, as *to the souls of men*."
—ROGER WILLIAMS, Providence, 15th January, 1681.

† See NOTE II.—The last days of the Charter Legislature, and the organization of the Government under the Constitution.

‡ Address of Thanks of the Town Meeting of Providence to Sir Henry Vane, August 27, 1654. "Under God," (says BACKUS, *Hist. of the Baptists*, vol. i., p. 286—BANCROFT, vol. i., p. 427), "the sheet-anchor of Rhode Island, was Sir Henry."

life, liberty, and property, been safer than in Rhode Island !”* And well do I remember the pathos of tone and the voice of trembling, when Professor Goddard, the orator, who, on May 3, 1843, made the address to the people of Rhode Island on the occasion of the change in Civil Government, wherein he said : “ Fellow citizens ! can we pass, without emotions allied to those of filial sorrow, from under the beneficent dominion of the old Charter, the oldest constitutional charter in the world ? Can we take our leave of this ancient and excellent frame of Civil Polity, without being penetrated with sentiments of gratitude for the rich blessings of which it has been the parent to this State, through all the vicissitudes of her being ? Can we ever lose the conviction that this Charter contains principles destined never to perish ? How inseparable, likewise, is the Charter from all our memories, not only of the deeds, but of the men of other times !”†

Shall I not, on this occasion, Sons of Rhode Island, recall the names and deeds of your fathers ? The muster-roll of no community, not larger than Rhode Island, has enriched history with men who have served their generation with conspicuous merit ; or moulded public affairs at home and abroad ; or acquired a world-wide fame in the annals of Peace and War, superior to the native and adopted citizens of our State. Though her population, even now, is surpassed in number by many a single ward in this great city of New York, yet, among the greater and lesser lights that spangle the firmament of national renown and shine throughout the civilized world, Rhode Island’s sons, reared under the benignant charter of democratic and religious liberty, have emblazoned her standard with their exploits, and pervaded the nations with their influences.

Crowning the list, stands ROGER WILLIAMS,‡ whose teachings and experiments in Christian Ethics and Political Organization are acknowledged to have inspired the statesmanship of

* Bancroft’s History of the United States, vol. ii., p. 64. See also NOTE I.

† Goddard’s Address, p. 23.

‡ See NOTE III.—Sketch of the Life of Roger Williams.

two continents. And passing along the years of our colonial infancy, till we reach the times of the Revolution, when the Colonies were ripening into the manhood of States, we come to the name of ABRAHAM WHIPPLE, the commander who first dared to attack and capture the British armed vessel, the Gaspee, in the Narragansett waters, on June 9-10, 1772, *shedding the first blood of the Revolution*, and lighting, in her burning wreck, the first beacon-fires in the War of Independence; and who, six years later, being the first Commodore with the commission of the Continental Congress, discharged the first American broadside into his Majesty's navy. All this happened in Narragansett waters. Whipple commanded the frigate Providence. WILLIAM JONES, afterwards Governor of Rhode Island from 1811 to 1817, was Captain of Marines, and bearer of dispatches to Dr. Franklin, in Paris.* The frigate passed the blockade from Providence to Point Judith, fired broadsides into the British frigate Lark and her Tender, and reached France in safety.† If posterity demand the names and deeds of the heroes who were foremost, and led the van of the patriot soldiers of "the times that tried men's souls," Rhode Island presents her valiant sons who were led by Whipple, and history awards to her the honorable pre-eminence.

And next stands ESEK HOPKINS, whom Congress, in 1775, selected and commissioned as Commodore of the first Fleet, and placed him at the head of the navy of the Republic, before the first year of Independence. It was he who trained JOHN PAUL JONES in seamanship, and prepared him for the sailing orders that sent him, in the *Ranger*‡ and the *Bon Homme Richard*, to devastate the coast of England and Scotland, and fling defiance to the lion in his lair, and spread before the dismayed populace of Britain, and the admiring eyes of Europe, the fresh flag of the Stars and Stripes, under whose folds he swept the seas of British commerce; and who has furnished story and song with the

* Captain Jones was the first officer of the navy of the United States who appeared in Europe in uniform.

† See NOTE IV.—Letter of William Jones Hoppin.

‡ Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution, vol. ii., pp. 640, 641.

theme of heroism, and whose victorious fight with the Serapis* is world-renowned. The navy of the United States was born and nursed and reared in Rhode Island, and organized by her sons.

If we turn now to the army of the Revolution, NATHANIEL GREENE,† the blacksmith of Warwick, standing next to WASHINGTON, was named by "the Father of his Country" as qualified to succeed him in the supreme command. He was the redeemer of the South from their captivity to the hostile Briton, and received from grateful Georgia both land and citizenship, as the tribute to her champion. And side by side with Greene fought Captain STEPHEN OLNEY‡, who commanded the Rhode Island Regiment (known as the Forlorn Hope of the army), and whom La Fayette entitled his brave comrade. At the siege of Yorktown, which terminated the War of Independence, the Rhode Island Regiment, led by Olney, stormed the works, and planted the victorious ensign of the emancipated Republic on the conquered battlements. I was present, when a boy, in 1824, at the entry of La Fayette into my native town of Providence, and witnessed the warm embrace of La Fayette and Olney at the west door of the State House, while the veterans wept in each other's arms. There was BARTON,§ too, who, at the peril of his life, seized General Prescott while in bed, surrounded by his guards, and bore him away, to be held as hostage for our captured General Lee. La Fayette found Barton in jail for debt, in Vermont, for the taxes on his bounty land,|| and released him from prison by paying his debt. Colonel CHRISTOPHER GREENE also, for his gallant defence of the Fort at Red Bank, deserves honorable mention. These were sons of Rhode Island, who, with a numerous company of patriots, fought the fight of Independence, and who led the armies of the Revolution. Besides these worthy men, Rhode Island gave to New York the first

* Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution, vol. ii., pp. 640, 641.

† His Life and Letters, edited by his grandson, George Washington Greene, will, when published, be welcomed as a most important contribution to the History of the Revolution.

‡ Mrs. Williams's Life of Barton and Olney. § *Ib.*

|| Barton swore he would not pay a tax for his country's gift.

Mayor of the city after the conquest by the English in 1665,—Thomas Willett, who afterwards returned to Rhode Island, where his monument still exists.* He was twice mayor, and was the great grandfather of the famous Colonel Marinus Willett,† of the Revolution.

And let us not forget Rhode Island's adopted son, the good DEAN BERKELEY, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne, in Ireland. Intent on the benevolence of missionary efforts among the Indians, in a time of deep religious lethargy in England, when bribery and corruption blackened Walpole's administration and darkened the historic era of both Church and State, Berkeley won the unforced eulogium of the poet Pope :

"To Berkeley, every virtue under heaven."

And the calm Bishop Atterbury‡ said of him : "So much understanding, so much knowledge, so much innocence, and such humility, I did not think had been the portion of any but angels, until I saw this gentleman." Arriving in Rhode Island January 23, 1729, with several literary and scientific gentlemen, and artists (among whom was Smybert, who gave the first impulse to American Art, in Painting and Architecture), he fixed his residence in Newport ; and was admitted freeman of Rhode Island by the Colonial General Assembly. He built a house (now standing and visited by the curious and the reverent), which he named "Whitehall ;" and there waited in vain for the promised endowment of his Indian College from the British Administration. But not in vain, nor idly, did this great man spend his time in Rhode Island. During his residence there, he meditated and composed his "Alciphron, or Minute Philosopher ;" and, as tradition says, wrote it in the natural alcove of the Hanging Rocks at the beach in Newport. Inspired by his

* Stone's Life and Recollections of John Howland, p. 267.

† Presiding officer of the Sons of Liberty in New York, in 1775 ; sheriff for several years, and Mayor in 1807. See *Narrative, with Sketch of his Life, New York during the American Revolution*, pp. 53-65.

‡ Francis Atterbury, born 1662, Bishop of Rochester under Queen Anne, friend of Pope, Swift, and Berkeley, was banished by the Parliament of George II., and died in France, in exile, 1742.

mystic theme, in full view of the ocean, and surrounded by the expanse of Nature, he produced a work which, for subtle argument and nice illustration, has commanded the admiration of the metaphysicians of the world; while it shamed into confusion the materialism of Hobbes and the sophistries of Hume, to the delight of theologians. It was published by James Franklin, in Newport. The old organ* in Trinity Church, Newport, and the Berkeley Library in Yale College, and in Harvard University, are mementos of the benevolence and learning of Bishop Berkeley. His letters to England first acquainted his contemporaries with the details of the climate and government of Rhode Island, with which he was charmed. In Newport, under the date of April 24, 1729, he writes to Thomas Prior, of Dublin, thus: "I can, by this time, say something to you, from my own experience, of this place and people. The inhabitants are of a mixed kind, consisting of many sects and subdivisions of sects. Here are four sorts of Anabaptists, besides Presbyterians, Quakers, Independents, and many of no profession at all. Notwithstanding so many differences, here are fewer quarrels about religion than elsewhere, the people living peaceably with their neighbors of whatsoever persuasion. They all agree in one point, that the Church of England is the second best. The climate is like that of Italy, and not at all colder in the winter than I have known it everywhere north of Rome. The summers are much pleasanter than those of Italy by all accounts; forasmuch as the grass continues green, which it doth not there. The vines sprout up of themselves to an extraordinary size, and seem as natural to this soil as to any I ever saw. The town of Newport contains about six thousand souls, and is the most thriving, flourishing place in all America for its bigness. I was never more agreeably surprised than at the first sight of the town and its harbor."†

* "The first organ ever heard in America."—LOSSING'S *Pictorial History of the U. S.*, p. 118. "In Old Trinity the organ he bestowed, peals over the grave of his firstborn in the adjoining burial-ground. A town in Massachusetts bears his name."—TUCKERMAN'S *Biographical Essays*, p. 266.

† Bishop Berkeley's Works—Extracts from Letters, p. xxii. Also Callender's *Historical Discourse in Collections of the R. I. Hist. Soc.*, vol. iv., p. 31, *notes*.

While residing in Newport, Dean Berkeley composed the stirring lyric that, with prophetic ken, startled into derision the men in the Old World, and now stirs the American people with its truth—the last verse of which Leutze has frescoed on the walls of the new Capitol at Washington, by his inimitable illustration. Though often quoted, yet, as a Rhode Island production, I may be pardoned for reproducing and reciting it.

It is entitled :

ON THE

Prospect of Planting ARTS and LEARNING in *America*.

THE Muse, disgusted at an Age and Clime,
Barren of every glorious Theme,
In distant Lands now waits a better Time,
Producing Subjects worthy Fame :

In happy Climes, where from the genial Sun
And virgin Earth such Scenes ensue,
The Force of Art by Nature seems outdone,
And fancied Beauties by the true :

In happy Climes the Seat of Innocence,
Where Nature guides and Virtue rules,
Where Men shall not impose for Truth and Sense,
The Pedantry of Courts and Schools :

There shall be sung another golden Age,
The rise of Empire and of Arts,
The Good and Great inspiring epic Rage,
The wisest Heads and noblest Hearts.

Not such as *Europe* breeds in her decay ;
Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heavenly Flame did animate her Clay,
By future Poets shall be sung.

Westward the Course of Empire takes its Way ;
The *four* first Acts already past,
A *fifth* shall close the Drama with the Day ;
TIME'S NOBLEST OFFSPRING IS THE LAST.

I come now to the third era in the History of Rhode Island—the Adoption of the Constitution of the United States.

The happy establishment of the Independence of the Colonies fixed Rhode Island as a State in the posture of sovereignty, wherein, she, more than any other of the Colonies, had placed herself. Her Charter was peculiar; her population, at first heterogeneous, and made up of refugees; and her territory become, what Roger Williams reckoned as its glory, the place of resort of all persons “distressed of conscience,” fleeing from the persecutions, real or fancied, of the Puritan brethren. She was sequestered, like her own dear island, from her neighbors, and stood aloof, in the dread of contact and in the pride of seclusion. All this produced and fostered a spirit of independence, both of thought and action. Nevertheless, Rhode Island was favorable to a Confederation, on the basis of her sovereignty as a State, with her sister Colonies. The dangers impending in 1774, which threatened the subjugation of the Colonies, had suggested the necessity of Union; and the “Sons of Liberty,” in New York, on the 16th of May, had made a proposal for “a General Congress.” But this, and other suggestions to the same end, were unofficial and diffused. But on the 17th of May, 1774, the people of Providence, in town meeting, formally proposed “a Union of the Colonies—the Continental Congress,” and “a few weeks later, the Legislature of Rhode Island was also the very first to elect Delegates to that Congress.” Accordingly, the Historian of Rhode Island, Mr. Arnold, justly claims for Rhode Island “the distinguished honor of making the first explicit movement” of established authority, for the Continental Congress, which framed the ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION.*

When the Articles of Confederation were adopted, which recognized the sovereignty of each State, and admitted all on an equality, Rhode Island had attained an acknowledged position, to which her institutions and her education had prompted her to aspire.

* Arnold's Hist. R. I., vol. ii., p. 334.

It is, hence, no matter of surprise, that her people should cling to the Confederation, when all the other States had abandoned it, and that Rhode Island should be the last of the States to adopt the "FEDERAL CONSTITUTION," whereon the unity of the American nation was to be established forever.

The prevailing temper of the people of Rhode Island was eminently conservative. They disliked change, and they were suspicious of all propositions to change, which emanated from a foreign source. They were, besides, remarkably prosperous. The harbors of Narragansett, not only could float the navies of the world, but the ancient city of Newport saw her wharves thronged with ships; and the town of Providence had sent the first ship to the East Indies which had left an American port. In an article of the *Newport Mercury*, about this time, the growth of New York was noticed; and the far-seeing writer, with evident complacency, ventured the prediction of congratulation to the Knickerbockers that New York would one day, far in the future, "rival Newport in Commercial prosperity and greatness." The country people of Rhode Island were not distinguished for learning; but, on the contrary, were deficient and below the standard of their neighbors in Connecticut and Massachusetts. There were no Free Schools in Rhode Island. And one of the evils of the great principle of religious independence, as pushed to the extreme latitude of personal prerogative, was the fancied right of religious indifference; so that the public teachings of ministers of the Gospel were nowhere held in less repute.

While in the early Colonial History we read of Mrs. Verin, who claimed the right to go as often as she pleased to Mr. Williams's meeting, in spite of her husband (who, finally, was obliged to remove back into Massachusetts to preserve his marital authority, that was jeopardized by the freedom of Rhode Island), on the other hand, at the close of the colonial period, the same principle of religious freedom, abused to licentiousness and latitudinarianism, had brought forth, with the neglect

of schools and churches, a profound ignorance, both of things divine and of things earthly.

This sad condition of the populace was the dark feature of the country towns, rather than of the towns on the coast. The towns of Providence, Newport, and Bristol were the residences of the merchants, the scholars, and the mechanics of the State. They were familiar with the ideas which governed the times, and understood the exigencies which demanded the development of the *Union* of the Confederacy into the full *unity* of the Constitution.* But the people of the country towns could neither appreciate the crisis nor tolerate the necessity of surrendering the dignity of the sovereignty of Rhode Island. And the country ruled the State. For, under the provisions of the Charter, the ancient village of Portsmouth sent as many Deputies to the Legislature as Providence; and Newport sent more. Moreover, there were politicians, "giants in those days." If the people of Rhode Island knew nothing else, they were familiar with local politics. And, one man more than any other in the State, though living in Providence, and mingling with the intelligent of the land, was the oracle of the country people, who obeyed his nod.

ARTHUR FENNER, the leading politician at that time, and for many years the Governor, was the leader of the opposition to the Constitution of the United States. When the proposal came from the Continental Congress to the several States to appoint Deputies to the Convention "to Revise the Articles of Confederation," Rhode Island, through Fenner's instigation, refused compliance. When that Convention, under the Presidency of George Washington, matured the Constitution, under which this Union, till of late, has prospered, Rhode Island, under the same bad influence, rejected it, by refusing to call a convention of the people, even to consider it.

¶ The Representatives, under the Charter, were chosen every six months; and the Legislature met every quarter of the year.

* Letter of Gen. James M. Varnum to Gen. Washington, President of the Federal Convention.—UPDIKE'S *Memoirs of the Rhode Island Bar*, pp. 300-302.

Notwithstanding those oft-recurring opportunities, the public sentiment was steadfastly opposed to any expression of favor to the new order of things proposed. Rhode Island clung to her traditions. South Carolina and the modern school of rebels never, until now, proclaimed State Rights and State Sovereignty like Rhode Island in 1789. And let me admire, with you, the Providence of Almighty God over our unity as a nation, which permitted Rhode Island to stand aloof from the Union till the favorable opportunity for amendment of the Federal Constitution had passed away.

In the Congress of 1789 the amendments were proposed, for the most part, which modified or explained the provisions of the Constitution. The State of Rhode Island adopted the Constitution May 29, 1790. It is said that there were some amendments proposed, and lacked but *one* vote to pass them, which would have reasserted State Rights, and almost State Sovereignty, to the manifest detriment of the grand and fundamental law of national unity, which the Constitution was designed and ordained to establish. If Rhode Island had been represented in that Congress of 1789, her vote might have prevailed to reduce the Constitution to the impotency of the Confederation ; or, at least, to confine its provisions and impair its consistency, so as to give color to the pretensions of the rebellious States, who are now ignobly striving, in war and blood, to overthrow the palladium of unity, of security, of prosperity, and of national life.*

Wherefore, in both what she has done, and in what for a time, through Divine Providence, she left undone, Rhode Island has been God's instrument in laying and in perpetuating the foun-

* For example, the first Amendment which Rhode Island proposed as a condition of her acceding to the Constitution, was, "The United States shall guarantee to each State its sovereignty, freedom, and independence," etc. 9th. "That Congress shall lay no direct taxes without the consent of the Legislatures of three-fourths of the States in the Union ;" and so on to twenty-one amendments. Extracted from one of the original 300 copies (preserved among the papers of the late Dr. Solomon Drowne) of the "*Ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the Convention of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*," published by order of the Convention, May 29, 1790.

dition of Constitutional Democratic Liberty, and also in preserving its developed Charter to the posterities unborn.

But, to recur to the period of strife, when the Old and the New were struggling for mastery, and the mother of the sons of Rhode Island was in her travail.

In June, 1788, the Convention of New Hampshire adopted the Constitution, as the ninth State; after which, in accordance with its provisions, it was to go into operation.

The friends of the Constitution in Rhode Island determined on celebrating the great event on the Fourth of July following, on Smith's Hill,* in Providence. But the country towns were in a ferment at the tidings; and on the 3d of July the neighboring woods were filled with armed men, resolved to prevent the celebration. The leaders of both parties conferred together, when it was agreed that the toasts and guns should be thirteen, instead of nine, in commemoration solely of Independence. On this condition the rural malcontents suffered the hilarity to proceed, and even remained to share a steak of the roasted ox, which was a prominent feature of the festivities. This reunion, it is said, considerably mollified the antagonism of the parties by the magic of a good dinner: for the country people, after fasting for twenty-four hours, were very hungry. But the friends of the Constitution, in Providence, would not forego their right to celebrate the great event. "On the next day, July 5th, the news reached Providence that Virginia had adopted the Constitution. They rang the bells, and formed a procession supposed to contain one thousand persons, which paraded through the principal streets of the town. The artillery company fired a salute of ten guns, which was answered by some larger cannon from Federal Hill.†

On the 29th of July, they heard that New York had adopted the Constitution. Invention was taxed to give a significant type to this fresh celebration; so, some genius of the day

* Land of Job Smith, at the head of the Cove, called "Federal Plain" by the papers of the day.

† Staples' Annals of Providence, p. 336.

devised the plan. The south side of "the Great (Weybosset) Bridge" was decorated with eleven national flags, representing the States in the order of their vote of adoption, with the several majorities inscribed upon them. While the north side of the bridge was conspicuous with a standard of North Carolina, on a pole which leaned thirty degrees; attached to which was also a banner, bearing the motto: "It will rise." And for Rhode Island the artist of the occasion furnished only a bare pole, leaning forty-five degrees, and a motto: "*Rhode Island in hopes.*"

The Government of the United States, under the Constitution, was organized in New York, March 4, 1789. This event rendered a session of the General Assembly necessary, as Judge Staples says, with quiet sarcasm, "*to provide for the foreign relations and commerce of the EMPIRE of Rhode Island.*"* But the Legislature was inexorable, and all petitions for the adoption of the Fœderal Constitution were referred to a future session for consideration. Meanwhile, the merchants of the State, dreading that Congress would pass laws against the commerce of Rhode Island, as of a foreign power, petitioned their forbearance and their mercy; which Congress freely bestowed for a time, limited in the Act. But even in that petition there is the appearance of a threat to join themselves in alliance with some other nation. "We feel ourselves attached," says the petition, "by the strongest ties of friendship, of kindred, and of interest to our sister States, and we cannot, without the greatest reluctance, *look to any other quarter* for those advantages of commercial intercourse which we conceive to be natural and reciprocal between them and us."

In November, 1789, North Carolina adopted the Constitution. Rhode Island was, thereupon, left alone, sovereign, independent, without alliances with any nation, and with no community bound to her by either treaty or community of interest. The fondest vision of the stout old conservatives was realized. *State Sovereignty* loomed up in its huge proportions through

* Staples' Annals of Providence, p. 337.

the delusive mirage of the political desert. The phantasm which had allured the islanders, in the self-complacency of their seclusion, for more than a century, now revealed its petty magnificence. Even the stolid countryman, and the determined partisan, and the desperate politician must have shrunk at the ridiculous spectacle. The film from the eye of stupidity, prejudice, and stubbornness began to dissolve, and the symptoms of clear sight revealed themselves at the next Legislature; still they postponed the question, but dared not to reject it. Finally, on Saturday, January 17, 1790, the subject was debated in earnest till night. Both branches then adjourned until the next morning, which was Sunday. The bill from the Lower House, calling a Convention, was before the Senate (or Assistants, as they were named in the Charter), when it appeared that one of the anti-Fœderal Assistants, who was also a minister of the Gospel, had left town to attend to his parish. This made a tie in the Senate, and threw the casting vote upon the Governor (John Collins), who, though of the anti-Fœderal party, yielded to the necessity, and decided for concurrence with the Lower House in calling a Convention.

The excitement on that memorable Sunday in Newport was intense; and while the churches were deserted, the streets were thronged with a rejoicing assemblage. At the following election, Governor Collins was defeated, in consequence of his vote for the Convention. The new General Assembly met at Newport on May 5th, with Arthur Fenner as Governor. On the 24th of May the CONVENTION met at Newport. On the 26th of May, the motion *to adopt the Fœderal Constitution was offered*. A test question was made to adjourn, and lost by nine votes. The motion to adopt the Constitution was then in order, and the instrument was read. "The State House," says Arnold, "could not contain the crowd of people assembled to witness the momentous proceedings. For more ample accommodation, the Convention removed to the Second Baptist Meeting House, where, for three days, the great debate continued. At five o'clock on Saturday afternoon, the final vote was taken.

Thirty-four members voted to adopt the Constitution, and thirty-two voted in the negative. A majority of two votes saved the people of Rhode Island from anarchy, and the State from dismemberment.”* The 29th day of May was thus signalized, Sons of Rhode Island, as among the birthdays of the Republic, and as the day of the new birth of Constitutional Union in our State.

As Mordecai M. Noah, quoting from Peter Wilkins, said of the coal-mines of Rhode Island: “They are the last place that will be consumed in the general conflagration;”† but, nevertheless, the coal is actually preferred for smelting furnaces; because, when ignited, it burns with fervent heat till it is consumed to ashes; so Rhode Island coal is significant of Rhode Island character. It is difficult to excite, but, when inflamed, it burns with enthusiasm and endures until death. It is hard to light it up, but it is harder to extinguish it. And as Rhode Island was the latest in adopting the Constitution of the United States, so she will be in ardor foremost to support, and the last to maintain, defend, and preserve the Union established by the Constitution.

This day, the 29TH OF MAY, was, peradventure, *the date likewise of the arrival of ROGER WILLIAMS off Slate Rock at “What Cheer,”*‡ and the SETTLEMENT OF “PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS” IN 1636. For the first record of Providence bears date the 16th of the 4th month (June, O. S.)§ And the “Annals of Providence” relate that Roger Williams and his five associates embarked in a canoe from Seekonk; and after exchang-

* Arnold's Hist. R. I., vol. ii., p. 562.

† Bryant, also, in his “Meditation on Rhode Island Coal,” thus apostrophizes it:

“Yea, they did wrong thee foully—they who mocked
Thy honest face, and said thou wouldst not burn;
Of hewing thee to chimney pieces talked
And grew profane—and swore, in bitter scorn,
That men might to thy inner caves retire,
And there, unsinged, abide the day of fire.”

‡ This event has been commemorated in stirring verse by the Hon. Job Durfee, late Chief Justice of Rhode Island.—See his poem, “What Cheer; or, Roger Williams in Banishment,” Canto IX.

§ Bartlett's Rhode Island Colonial Records, vol. i., p. 13.

ing salutations with the Indians at Slate Rock, in Seekonk River, they sailed (or paddled) around Fox Point and up Providence River, *where they landed in the month of May, or early in June.** Another record says it was "In the *spring* of 1636;"† it was not in June therefore. The 29th day of May, being the just middle date in the last week in May, and June not being in "the spring of the year," may accordingly be reckoned as the era of the founding of "Providence Plantations in New England." As the founder named the place where he landed "Providence, in grateful remembrance of God's merciful providence to him in his distress,"‡ so we may, with filial gratitude, admire and praise the Providence of God, which guided the Commonwealth along the untried paths of political and religious experiments, and celebrate this day, the 29th of May, both as dutiful Sons of Rhode Island, and as loyal citizens of this Republic of the United States.

Indeed, this day (the 29th of May) might be properly a day of sacred joy to all the world, for (in the exulting language of Mr. Bancroft, in his History of the United States), "the annals of Rhode Island, if written in the spirit of philosophy, would exhibit the forms of society under a peculiar aspect; had the territory of the State corresponded to the importance and singularity of the principles of its early existence, *the world would have been filled with wonder at the phenomena of its history.*"§

What God may have in store for her to do, we will not prophesy. But if the past be the oracle of the future; if principles be the seed of ripened conduct; if the insignia of arms and the blazonry of standards be the proclamation of determined minds, then Rhode Island shall go on to glory in the van of advancing civilization, leading the nations in their march of democratic freedom.

For the first act of equality and justice, the basis of demo-

* Staples' Annals of Providence, p. 21.

† Elton's Life of Roger Williams, p. 38.

‡ *Ib.*, p. 38.

§ Bancroft's History U. S., vol. i., p. 380.

cratic government, was recorded in 1638 in the "Initial Deed" from Roger Williams of the lands which he purchased of Canonicus and Miantinomoh, granting to his thirteen (mystic number) of fellow-citizens, "the equal right and power of enjoying and disposing of the grounds and lands, which were so lately given and granted by the two aforesaid sachems to him."*

And note the Records of Rhode Island in 1639, when it was ordered "that a Manual Seale shall be provided for the *State*, and that the Signett or Engraving thereof shall be a sheafe of arrows bound up [with a snake's skin,†] and in the Liess or Bond, this motto indented: AMOR VINCET OMNIA.‡ And again, in 1647, it was ordered, "that the Seale of the Province shall be an Anchor,"§ under the Charter which Roger Williams procured from Cromwell's Parliament, through the Earl of Warwick. And, finally, in 1664, it was ordered that the old seal of "the Anker," with the word "HOPE" over the head of it, shall be the "Seale of the Collony,"|| under the Royal Charter of Charles II.

Is not the escutcheon of Rhode Island the demonstration of her principles, and of her determination, and of her progress? She calls herself a "State" as early as 1639. "*All-conquering Love*," bestowing equality and justice, with "*arrows*" to defend the rights of all against invasion or insurgency; the "*Anchor*," sure and steadfast, the emblem of fixedness and conservatism, fastening the ship of state to Wisdom in the past, while "Hope" inscribed there, to indicate the land of refuge for the oppressed in conscience, and being lifted above all, points upward to Heaven for aid and inspiration, and beckons forward to a future wherein the Sons of Rhode Island, obedient to the instructions of their venerable mother, shall do further exploits on the arena of human life in coming ages, and emblazon fresh pages of Lib-

* Initial Deed—Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, vol. i., p. 19.

† R. I. Historical Coll., vol. iii., p. 11. Prince's N. E. Chronology, p. 200.

‡ Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, vol. i., p. 115. The motto here referred to has been adopted, and inscribed on the banner of our fraternity, together with the "Anchor," and its legend "Hope," of subsequent seals.

§ Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, vol. i., p. 151. A fac simile of Record.

|| *Ib.*, vol. ii., p. 41.



erty and Law, on the history of the world. Is not the escutcheon of the Sons of Rhode Island the symbol of her principles, her determination and her progress?

And let us recruit our memories again with the names of Rhode Island's sons (providential men), whom God raised up to sow good seed, under the Constitution of the United States and the old Charter, on that chosen spot of "The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations."

Here SAMUEL SLATER* came and set up the first cotton-mill in America, introducing the vast interest of cotton manufacture to this Western Continent. He, too, in Pawtucket, in 1791, is said to have established the first Sunday school in America.† Here GILBERT STUART‡ was born and reared, who is the peer of the best painters and the acknowledged head of the art in the United States. And, in this connection, it may be stated that COPLEY, the Boston boy, received his first impulses from the pictures which Smybert brought with him in the train of Bishop Berkeley;§ and, thus, the great painter, Copley (the father of Lord Lyndhurst,|| late Chancellor of England, and of Mrs. Gardiner Green, of Boston), gained his inspiration through Rhode Island. There was EDWARD G. MALBONE, the painter of "The Hours," whom Benjamin West sent home to Rhode Island, saying that *he* could teach him nothing. Of Malbone, Dunlap says, quoting the *Analectic Magazine* for 1815, "Whoever writes the history of American genius, or of American Arts, will have failed to do justice to his subject if he omit the name of Malbone.¶ Nor must I omit the name of WASHINGTON ALLSTON, who, though born in South Carolina, was sent to Newport for his health at the early age of six, in 1785, where he

* White's *Memoir of Samuel Slater, and History of Manufactures*.

† One of the first scholars, Benjamin G. I. Dexter, is yet alive.

‡ National Portrait Gallery.

§ Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, vol. ii., p. 673.—"John Smybert." Dunlap's *History of the Arts of Design in the United States*, vol. i., pp. 21, 27, 104.

|| Tuckerman's *Biographical Essays*, p. 257.

¶ Born at Boston in 1772, and deceased in London, October, 1863.

¶¶ Dunlap's *Arts of Design*, vol. i., p. 14. Tuckerman's *Artist-Life*, p. 58.

received his education,* till he went to Harvard University in 1796; obtaining, as he himself acknowledged, the first impression of painting, and recognizing his own rare capacity, from his boyish intercourse with Malbone.

The Fine Arts and Manufactures found congenial soil in Rhode Island.

And what of Commerce? HENRY COLLINS, of Newport, was known and styled as the Lorenzo de Medicis of Rhode Island,† for his enterprise as a merchant, and for his patronage of the fine arts. JOHN BROWN,‡ of Providence, a merchant prince, whose ventures compassing the globe, reached the East Indies, whither he dispatched the first American ship§ that doubled the Cape of Good Hope. CHRISTOPHER CHAMPLIN and GEORGE GIBBS, of Newport, these too, with others, were pioneers in commerce.

In Law, HENRY WHEATON, born and bred in Providence, composed the work on "International Law," which is now, at this time of controversy, a text book of the Cabinets of Europe and the United States. Mr. Harris, late minister of the United States in Japan, says that "the only foreign author whom the Japanese honor is Henry Wheaton; and the only book which they have translated, is Wheaton on International Law." His reports of the Supreme Court are, likewise, the masterful exponents of the judgments under the Constitution.

And a throng of publicists and lawyers rise up to memory. I stand not on the order of their coming. SAMUEL WARD, some time Governor, was Chairman of the Committee of the Whole in the Continental Congress, when they made choice of

* The salubrious climate and good schools of Newport brought many Carolinian boys to Rhode Island. General James Hamilton was here taught. John C. Calhoun was at school in Newport, where he courted and afterwards married his cousin, Floride Calhoun. Did he imbibe his notions of State Sovereignty here, to impregnate the South with its virus? If so, the fable of the eagle, shot by an arrow feathered with a plume from her own wing, is verified by the existing Southern Rebellion, instigated by the teachings of Calhoun.

† Letter of Dr. Waterhouse, in R. I. Hist. Coll., vol. iv., p. 44.

‡ Hague's Historical Discourse, p. 102, 182.

§ The "General Washington."

George Washington "to command all the Continental forces raised, or to be raised, for the defence of American liberty."*

JAMES MITCHELL VARNUM, renowned for eloquence at the bar, and for military talents: he was Colonel of the Kentish Guards, that furnished, as from a military school, twenty-four officers for the Continental army, of whom the orderly sergeant, General Greene, was one. Having served in the Army of the Revolution as Brigadier-General, and in the Continental Congress, Varnum was the first Federal Judge of the Northwestern Territory.†

BENJAMIN BOURNE, the grand old champion of the Federal Constitution, who renewed the motion in the Convention for its adoption, which was carried; THEODORE FOSTER, the first Senator, renowned alike in law and statesmanship; DAVID HOWELL, WILLIAM BRADFORD, and SAMUEL EDDY ‡ made their mark on the age. BENJAMIN HAZARD, § HENRY BULL, SAMUEL W. BRIDGHAM (first Mayor of Providence), as scholars and lawyers, are famous. And among the men of this next generation, NATHANIEL SEARLE, TRISTAM BURGESS, and JOHN WHIPPLE were a triumvirate of barristers to whom Judge Story was accustomed to yield homage, saying to the former, "You know, sir, as much law as I." But, towering above all, in sweet benignity of aspect, JAMES BURRILL || was conspicuous and celebrated for both knowledge of law, acuteness of intellect, retentiveness of memory, grace of diction, eloquence in pleading, earnestness in conviction and fidelity to his clients, with elegant taste and simplicity of manners, and purity of character. As a statesman, his short career in Congress as Senator, evinced broad, national views of public policy, and his lamented death in Washington, like that of his friend Lowndes, of South Carolina, in the ripeness of prime manhood, hushed the voices of beautiful wisdom, and plunged both North and South in grief. It is well that his

* Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, vol. vii., pp. 529-532, *note*.

† Updike's Memoirs of the R. I. Bar, pp. 145-233.

‡ Goddard's Address, p. 58.

§ *Ib.*, p. 62.

|| *Ib.*, p. 57.

grandson* is our poet to-night, to sing of Rhode Island in his glowing verse.

The State of Rhode Island has given JONATHAN RUSSELL,† the erudite HENRY WHEATON,‡ and the stately WILLIAM HUNTER§ to Diplomacy, as Representatives of our country at foreign courts.

In Natural Science, Dr. BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE,|| of Newport, Professor in Rhode Island College and in Harvard University, has an European fame. In 1800 (the year following its publication in England, and four years after its discovery by Dr. Jenner), he brought Vaccination to the United States, and applied it first in Rhode Island. Dr. SOLOMON DROWNE,¶ distinguished for extensive researches in Botany and Materia Medica, of which sciences he was Professor in Brown University, was one of the first to encourage the scientific study of Agriculture, and did much to develop a taste for floriculture and landscape-gardening throughout the State. AMOS ATWELL, the blacksmith, Colonel in the Revolutionary Army and Legislator, was the founder and first elected president of one of the earliest Mechanics' Associations.** NICHOLAS BROWN,†† was the munificent encourager of learning. ISAAC SENTER, LEVI WHEATON, and USHER PARSONS have contributed, with WILLIAM HUNTER, the elder, to medical science.

* George William Curtis.

† Envoy Extraordinary to Ghent, with John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, and J. A. Bayard. KNIGHT'S *Hist. of England*, vol. viii., p. 19.

‡ Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Berlin.—*Homes of the American Statesmen*, pp. 449–469. "The most able representative," said the venerable Albert Gallatin to the Hon. John Russell Bartlett, "of the American Government abroad, during the last forty years."

§ Minister to Brazil. || Arnold's *Hist.*, R. I., vol. i., p. 523, *note*.

¶ Biographical Memoir by the Rev. T. S. Drowne.—*Sketches of R. I. Physicians*, p. 25. New York during the American Revolution, p. 76.

** The Mechanics' Society's Rooms, and the Roger Williams Hall, stand on the site of Amos Atwell's house.

†† Brown University is indebted to him for the greater part of its buildings and endowments, and hence bears his name;—an Institution, the Presidents and Professors of which have been an honor to learning, among whom may be mentioned Manning, Maxcy, Elton, Wayland, Caswell, Sears, etc.—Prof. Gammell's article in "*Am. Journal of Education*," June, 1857. Pres. Wayland's Commemorative Discourse, Nov. 3, 1841. Judge Pitman's Alumni Address, Sept. 5, 1843.

Shall we step into the garden of Literature and Divinity? Rhode Island points to WILLIAM G. GODDARD, as the elegant writer and *belles lettres* professor; who for years made the "Rhode Island American" newspaper, the model of good English, and sound logic, and just criticism of men and things, to the Press of the United States. She points to WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING for all that is chaste in rhetoric, and earnest in expression, and persuasive in eloquence. She tells us of TRISTAM BURGESS, and ASHER ROBBINS, as masters of the classics. She rejoices in GEORGE BURGESS, Bishop of Maine, as poet and theologian; and in THOMAS CHURCH BROWNELL,* Bishop of Connecticut, and Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

Would you now emerge from the academic shades, and leave the flowers of thought, for the arena of stern War—Rhode Island turns to her son OLIVER HAZARD PERRY, the victor of the British Fleet on Lake Erie, in 1813, just fifty years ago. His ships, when he, and the Rhode Island boys with him, arrived at the shores of the lake, were *trees*, growing in the primeval forest; but which their lusty arms and tried skill fashioned and equipped into vessels of war. His personal valor and calm judgment in quitting the disabled Lawrence, and rowing through fire and shot to the untouched Niagara,† and bearing down in her, breaking the enemy's lines with double broadsides; plucking victory, for the first time, from a fleet of "the proud Mistress of the Seas," has won for the name of Perry, continuously for half a century, the spontaneous praise of a thankful nation; who, in Congress assembled, adopted his children as the people's orphans, and enrolled him among the country's heroes. His piety dictated the official announcement to the Secretary of the Navy, that "It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal

* A lineal descendant of Benjamin Church, the hero of King Philip's War.

† This passage of Perry is portrayed in the magnificent painting by Powell, ordered by the State of Ohio, and now being finished in the city of New York.

victory over the enemies on this lake."* But the haste and ardor of the hour of battle, prompted him to indite, on a leaf of a memorandum book, resting on the top of his naval cap, a phrase like that of Cæsar's, and shall live as long: "*We have met the Enemy, and they are ours.*"

And in humbler rank, but with as heroic devotion, the Navy, in the second War of Independence, exulted in WILLIAM HENRY ALLEN, the valiant son of Rhode Island, whose death on the deck of the *Argus*, amidst the shouts of the victory he had helped to win, subdued the rejoicing of the nation.

In the war with Mexico, as colleague of General Scott, Chief of the Army, the Commander-in-chief of the Naval Forces was Commodore MATTHEW CALBRETH PERRY, born in Newport, and one of the most filial sons of Rhode Island. The crowning act of Commodore M. C. Perry, which has created an era in the world, and has made his name historic among the nations, is his opening of Japan. That sequestered people, for centuries, had embargoed all political communication and commercial intercourse, except with the Dutch on the small island of Desima, in the port of Nangasaki. But the acquisition of California made manifest a new route to China and the East, by ocean steamers. The islands of Japan, fixed midway in the route, and containing coals, rendered the opening of her ports a commercial necessity, besides promising fresh rewards to commercial enterprise.

The prudence and sagacity displayed in this great political success of recovering an EMPIRE to fellowship with the family of nations, while acknowledged by all men, is particularly demonstrated in the official letter published by Congress, and in the narrative of the expedition, written by Commodore Perry himself. The language of the narrative is remarkable for its Saxon strength and clearness. Its style is Addisonian in elegance and purity. It was my good fortune to read the

* Inauguration of the Perry Statue at Cleveland, O., Sept. 10, 1860. Perry's Dispatches, p. 87.

manuscript in Commodore Perry's handwriting; and when I asked him, "why he had spoken of himself in the *third person*," he replied that "he could not endure the egotism of the *I*;" and when he found himself, in consequence, tempted to suppress the truth of history, and when he reflected that his countrymen had a right to know the facts exactly as they occurred, he resolved to write in the *third person* with just freedom, and to ask some friend to edit the volumes, as the *quasi* historian of the expedition. And in this aspect they are published to the world. Such was the modesty of the author, matched by his integrity as a man, his accomplishments as a writer, his bravery as an officer, his untiring industry as a public servant, his loyalty to the whole country, and his love to his native Rhode Island. One of the happiest hours of his useful life, was in receiving, after a long absence, the public approbation of the State, through her official organs, in the presence of his townsmen in Newport. And his last wish, expressed to me, was, to be buried by his father and mother and brother, in the *old* burial ground, to mingle his dust with his native soil. He even chose his grave there. But New York, the commercial emporium, has claimed his body, and the country his fame. Yet Rhode Island will ever cherish his memory as her son.

And shall I refrain from naming, because he was my brother, a son of Rhode Island, JOHN ROGERS VINTON, who at Vera Cruz, after having advanced to the walls to repel any sally of the foe, and while commanding the trenches on the opening of the fire, on the first day of the siege, fell the foremost sacrifice on the altar of his country, in the triumphal march of the army from Vera Cruz to Mexico? By permission of the War Department, he spent many months in drilling the citizens of Rhode Island, after "The Dorr War," and was signally instrumental in acquainting them with the military art, which they have so well put in practice during the present rebellion. His native State of Rhode Island honored his name in her Legislative annals; procured his body, ordained a public funeral, and

lodged his remains in the soil he loved so well and truly.* And had his life been spared to his country, General Scott has said, "John R. Vinton would have borne an early and prominent part in commanding the armies of the Union and Constitution."†

All these men grew up under the old charter and the Federal Constitution, inhaling the spirit which they inculcated of law and order, of conservative prudence and progressive ardor, of Loyalty and Patriotism. Like the Roman Matron, our dear mother leads forth her sons, proclaiming, "These are my Jewels." There are many others in her casket, but she reserves her wealth, as a prudent mother should. How many are here present, strayed or purloined for the benefit of New York, I will not say.

But considering the narrow bounds of our State, and its small population, I am bold to challenge the display of more shining lights, who have irradiated the pathway of our country's progress, in the various walks of Peace, among the Manufactures, the Fine Arts, the Sciences, the Literature, the Professions of Law and Medicine, the employments of Statesmanship and Diplomacy, the calling of Divinity, and the enterprises of Commerce, or on the Arena of War by Sea and on Land, than Rhode Island has contributed to our country's advancing greatness.

It is said, facetiously, in Rhode Island, that her people are less civilized the nearer you approach to Connecticut. But Connecticut retorts that she has observed the same phenomenon in *her* border population. As to Massachusetts, since they banished Roger Williams, and sent a force to seize him at Rehoboth to carry him back to England, and he crossed the Seekonk River to escape them, the sons of Rhode Island are suspicious and jealous of much intercourse with them, except in the way of supplying them with just sentiments of tolera-

* Buried in Swan Point Cemetery, in June, 1847, beneath an appropriate monument, surmounted by the unexploded shell with which he was struck.

† See NOTE V.—Letter of Hon. Henry B. Anthony, U. S. Senator of R. I.

tion. But, on the southern boundaries of the State, the sons of Rhode Island hold glad fellowship with the *ocean*, whose waves clap their hands all round its coast, and whether resting on its calm bosom, or lifted in its outstretched arms, the winds of Heaven are sure at last to bring them on the ocean into communion with the world. Rhode Island is small, but proud. "Which is larger, Delaware or Rhode Island?" said a tall Hoosier to a Rhode Island lady;* who replied, scanning him from hat to boots, "*We do not, in Rhode Island, measure by the foot, but by the head.*" Rhode Island is small, but very important. An anecdote is current there,† interesting to the philosopher as a matter of fact, and illustrating how small agencies produce vast effects; or how a Cranston man produced the war of 1812, with England.

James Rhodes, of Providence, owned a farm in Cranston. His neighbor, Reuben Perry, owned a pig. The pig broke into Rhodes's "clover meadow," and did damage. Rhodes sent two boys to chase the pig, and the pig died from overheating. Perry sued Rhodes for the price of the pig, and employed James Burrill as his counsel. James Burrill gained the case, and Rhodes was mad, and vowed revenge on James Burrill. An election occurred in 1811, for Senator in the Congress which declared war with Great Britain; James Burrill, a *Fœderalist*, was a candidate; whom Rhodes procured Judge Mathewson, of Scituate, a representative to the General Assembly, to oppose, although both Rhodes and Mathewson were of the same party with Burrill. Burrill was defeated by *one vote*. Jeremiah B. Howell, a democrat, who was elected, was in favor of the war; and the war was declared by Congress by *one vote* in the Senate.‡ If Burrill had been elected to the United States Senate, there would have been no declaration of war. So the controversy of the Rhode Island pig produced the war with England.

"Tall oaks from little acorns grow,
Large streams from little fountains flow."

* Mrs. Joseph L. Tillinghast.

† See NOTE VI.—Letter of George C. Arnold.

‡ See latter part of Note V.

I might suggest further examples of Rhode Island influence on the country.* Let your orator to-night not be charged with suppressing truth, or with exalting overmuch the civilization of Rhode Island.

The influence of the old Charter, we have seen, produced intense conservatism in the sons of Rhode Island. This disposition was felt as an evil in the oft-defeated attempts to establish public schools. When a society of benevolent ladies, in Providence set themselves to establish Schools in Foster and East Greenwich, they were much hindered by the suspicion of doing something dangerous to the freedom of the inhabitants. Posterity owes it chiefly to the zeal and pertinacity of JOSEPH L. TILLINGHAST and JOHN HOWLAND† for the system of public schools which now honors and elevates her people.

Dr. Hubbard, of Pomfret, Conn., used to illustrate the plain fare of the Rhode Islanders on the border, worthy of the hard living of our brethren of the secession army. Attending a patient in Rhode Island, he stopped at the tavern in Chepachet, where he beheld against the wall a huge pile of what seemed *boards*. He asked the landlady what they were for, who replied that "they were cold johnnycakes for the Town Council, who were to meet there the next day." What would our city fathers say to such fare?

Without doubt, an envious person might find other matters to blame or ridicule in Rhode Island; but, so likewise, he would see the spots on the sun, or the flaw in the diamond. Charity, like the bee, sucks honey from every herb. Envy, like the spider, extracts venom from the sweetest flower.

Rhode Island! there she stands! with her history before the world, her sons and daughters by her side. Her record, under the first Charter of human liberty, framed by men's hands, is her sufficient eulogium. She is not perfect. She is human. She claims no more.

* Rhode Island clam-bakes are growing into an institution. Perhaps I ought to add that John B. Chace was always great on advertisements, and the Corypheus of modern trumpeters of their wares.

† Life and Recollections of John Howland, by E. M. Stone.

We now enter the fourth period—when “that venerable Charter” expired, in 1843, and revived in the existing Constitution.

Few persons can comprehend that crisis. It was the first organized struggle of radical democracy with conservative democracy, of mass meeting with constituted government, of anarchy with law and order. It was, therefore, a trial of the stability of constitutional freedom against the assaults of passionate will.

The cardinal principle of political wisdom incorporated in the Charter of Rhode Island, was this: that “They who owned the soil of the State, should govern the State.” Every voter possessed the freehold qualification of landed estate, worth, at least, \$134, or was the eldest son of such freeholder. An interest in the soil was the pledge of attachment to the State. Even under the Constitution of 1843, no foreign-born citizen may vote, unless he owns *land*. The provision of landed property qualification in persons eligible for office, was universal and axiomatic in the first constitutions of the old thirteen States. It was a fundamental and unquestioned guarantee of sound legislation. A property qualification, personal or real, was deemed essential in both voters and officers by the fathers of the Republic. Mr. Jefferson, in his “Notes on Virginia,” has named two things as ruinous to representative government, viz.: *First*, universal suffrage; *second*, the facility of naturalization. The one admits foreigners, unfamiliar with free institutions, to vote, and to be elected to office; the other gives scope to the machinations of demagogues.

Every State had amended its constitution, enlarging suffrage and breaking down the barriers against demagoguism, except Rhode Island. The new States came into the Union with constitutions more and more unlimited in provisions of suffrage. The huge wave of radical democracy had overspread the land, obliterating the conservative waymarks of the original republicanism; and Rhode Island was firm as her rocks, surrounded by the deluge of waters. Meanwhile the prodigious increase of her cotton manufactures had attracted a large foreign popula-

tion. Villages sprang up, towns grew in numbers and in wealth; politicians began to harangue the populace. The provision of primogeniture was a feature in the Charter uncongenial with our American institutions, and the royal source of the Charter was a topic for prejudice and denunciation. At length a new political philosophy was broached—that suffrage was a *natural* right, and that a majority of the people (inconsistently excluding women and children), might, by vote in mass meeting, overturn and annihilate the existing government. This was anarchy, for the people of to-morrow might, with equal propriety, overthrow the government of to-day.

In May, 1841, a mass meeting in Newport called a convention to frame a "People's Constitution;" and on this new doctrine the populace voted a spurious government, and framed a so-called Constitution in October, 1841. The Legislature of Rhode Island had already ordered a Convention to frame a lawful Constitution, in November, 1841, which, on being submitted to the freeholders, was rejected in March, 1842. The old Rhode Island spirit was at last aroused to defeat the spurious government, and WAGER WEEDEN prudently declined being Governor under the People's Constitution, when THOMAS WILSON DORR* bravely took the lead. Dorr was a scholar, a gentleman, a philosopher; but a disappointed man. On the 3d of May, 1842, the spurious government was organized, with Dorr as Governor. Dorr's Legislature was suffered to convene in the new foundry† in Providence; and on the 15th day of its organization, it seized the guns of the Artillery Company, marched in open day along the streets, through throngs of silent citizens, to the "Alarm Post;" and threatened to seize the State arsenal that night. That 18th of May, 1842, was a dark and dismal epoch of our history. This was the fearful crisis. But the citizens of Providence rushed to the arsenal. SULLIVAN DORR, the honored father of the chief of the insurgents, joined the loyal band of the defenders of the State. Old men and young

* Dan King's Life and Times of Dorr, pp. 63, 284–293.

† At Eddy's Point, known as Fuller's Foundry, since destroyed by fire.

men shut themselves in the arsenal, determined to defend it with their lives.

The faction of Dorr, the younger, dragged the artillery which they had stolen, to the arsenal plain, and put it in battery,—son against father. It was too fearful an experiment, and the insurgents quailed. In the morning, therefore, they established themselves on Federal Hill, rent by conflicting counsels. The Legislature of the Charter had just adjourned in Newport. The Governor (King) sent messengers everywhere, and rallied the military forces of the towns. In Newport, at midnight, the bells tolled the tocsin. People rose from their beds and prayed. The young men hastily put on their soldiers' uniform and gathered together to go to battle. Mothers and sisters, in tears, embraced them, and fathers grimly gave them their blessing. At dawn of day the steamboat took the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, as it was supposed, to death. Every town, in like manner, responded to the summons of the Government, and sent their armed men to Providence. But here the woful lack of military science was made manifest. Who should command the forces; how to attack the enemy; what to do and when to do it, were questions not readily answered. The foe was on Federal Hill, with artillery loaded with slugs from machine shops, posted at the head of a deep cut (now Atwell's Avenue), to defend the passage. WILLIAM BLODGET, late Colonel of the Providence Cadets, was chosen to command the troops. He knew no artifices of strategy, nor comprehended the merit of flank movements; but, taking counsel of his brave heart, he marched the little army, the Newport artillery at the head, in column, up the causeway, in face of the cannon's mouth.* One discharge would have dealt death to hundreds of those Rhode Islanders. The very intrepidity of that rash movement appalled the leaders of the insurgents. They dreaded to spill the first blood. But not so did some of their infuriated followers feel. *William P. Dean* (known as "one-arm Bill"), who held

* *Providence Journal* and *Evening Chronicle*, May 18 and 19, 1842. Also *New York Journal of Commerce*, vol. xxvi., No. 5431, May 20, 1842.

the lighted linstock, was pinioned, it is said, in the arms of Marshal Burrington Anthony, as he was about to fire; and then, in desperation, attempted to throw the burning fuse upon the cannon. That delay was propitious to the loyal cause, and fatal to the rebels. Colonel Blodget's column gained the hill, and seized the guns, and scattered the insurgents.

Dorr's Legislature was now fugitive, like his army. He left the State, and sought for allies from the notorious Empire Club, of New York. Meanwhile, the women of the insurgent party were furious.* They upbraided the men for cowardice; they held secret meetings to provide cartridges for future use, and to devise methods for fresh attempts.

The loyal men of the State began in earnest to prepare for civil war. All the common occupations of life were suspended. The State was about to be invaded. The assistance of the General Government, in Washington, was invoked. At length the storm burst. In the last week in June, 1842, Dorr returned with an armed escort, chiefly of the "Spartan Band," of New York—political scallawags—headed by Mike Walsh, attended by a Colonel Hopkins, keeper of the Pewter Mug, with the frequenters of that low porter-house; with which force he intrenched himself at Acote's Hill, Chepachet. In this desperate effort Dorr was joined by other desperate men, armed with pikes, scythes, fowling-pieces, a battery of six cannon—in all, nearly 1,000 men, combined in foul conspiracy to overthrow, by force of arms, the regular government of Rhode Island.

The whole State, as one man, arose in martial guise. Rhode Island was a camp. Her arsenals had been filled; her men trained; her sentries were placed in the streets of Providence; and the studies of the University were suspended; her wealth and her skill had been voluntarily subsidized, till she presented a front that dismayed the invaders. The whole number of the loyal forces, infantry, artillery, cavalry (two companies), and staff actually in service, is estimated at 3,800.

* Mrs. Catharine R. Williams, authoress of the *Lives of Barton and Olney*, has related to me, with professions of compunction, the violence of the insurgent women.

On Saturday, 25th June, a meeting* was held of the sons of Rhode Island resident in New York, at which it was resolved that all, who could, should proceed at once to Providence to aid in vindicating the honor and maintaining the laws of their native State. Quite a number left that evening, and assembled on the following morning, with several of the citizens, at the City Hotel in Providence, and formed the Company of "Rhode Island Carbiniers," of which James N. Olney was Captain.

The sons of Rhode Island in other cities and towns, hastened home to offer themselves for the defence of the State, and were immediately enrolled among the forces.

The loyal troops marched on Chepachet, and the enemy fled away. The following announcement of victory† was published by General William Gibbs McNeil, commander-in-chief in Providence:

"ORDERS No. 54, HEADQUARTERS, *June 28th, 1842.*

"The village of Chepachet and fort of the insurgents, were *stormed* at a quarter before eight o'clock this morning, and *taken*, with about *one hundred prisoners*, by Colonel William W. Brown. *None killed; none wounded.* Dorr has fled.

By order of Major-General MCNEIL.

ELISHA DYER, Jr., Adjt.-General."

Dorr was impeached for treason and confined in prison. The State then adopted the present Constitution in 1843.

"The Dorr War" was the school which has made Rhode Island and her soldiers foremost in suppressing the present great rebellion. It quenched in shame and ignominy the flames of radical democracy, which were threatening the direst calamities to the free republican institutions, not only of Rhode Island, but of the United States. As in bombardment, the safest place is where a cannon ball has passed through, so Rhode Island is henceforth the place of security against the assaults of faction within the battlements of Law and Order. The noble determination of the citizen soldiers of Providence, and the gallant yeomen of Rhode Island, amid the confusion which reigned in that civil war, has been celebrated in beautiful and spirited verse, in the lyric poem of George Burgess.‡

* The officers, Randall H. Greene, Chairman, and John H. Ormsbee, Secretary.

† *Providence Morning Courier*, Vol. VII., No. 57, July 19, 1842.

‡ See NOTE VII.—Bishop Burgess' Poem on Rhode Island, in 1842.

Sons of Rhode Island! The last era in the annals of our State is the present epoch of civil war. I shall not prophesy. We are making history now. It must suffice to say that the Governor (Sprague*) of Rhode Island dispatched the first telegraphic message to the President of the United States, offering the whole strength of the State to maintain the Federal Constitution, and union of the country, against the rebels, who have lifted unholy hands against the best government in the world. Although Massachusetts dispatched men, who made the 19th of April, 1861, memorable for the first blood of the war for the Union, shed in Baltimore on the same calendar that commemorates the first Massachusetts blood on the 19th of April, 1775, at Lexington, in the war for Independence, yet Rhode Island was second in the field; while showing herself Pallas-armed, she was the *FIRST fully equipped and ready for immediate service.*† Rhode Island has contributed soldiers to suppress this rebellion of the slave States, in proportion *greater* than any of her loyal sisters, except Kansas. The ratio of Rhode Island soldiers to population, is 1 to $11\frac{1}{10}$; of Massachusetts, 1 to $17\frac{2}{5}$; and of Maine, 1 to $20\frac{2}{5}$.‡

Her BURNSIDE§ has led her forces|| to battle at Bull Run; and to victory at Roanoke, and Newbern, and Fort Macon; while her RODMAN,¶ and SLOCUM,** and other soldiers have sealed their patriotism in death. Her sons, with their swords, are carving immortal history†† on the fortresses of rebellion, and diffusing, with their bullets, the seeds of a free civilization in the plantations of slavery.

* See NOTE VIII.—Letter of the Hon. Wm. Sprague, U. S. Senator of R. I.

† See NOTE IX.—The Three Telegrams—"War News in other cities."

‡ See NOTE X.—Ratio of soldiers to population in twenty-four States.

§ Ambrose Everett Burnside, Major-General, and Commander of the Army of the Potomac at the battle of Fredericksburg.

|| See NOTE XI.—Reminiscences of the Sons of Rhode Island in New York.

¶ Brigadier-General Isaac P. Rodman, of South Kingston, Rhode Island, fell mortally wounded while gallantly leading a Division against the enemy at the battle of Antietam, Md.—Major-General George B. McClellan being in command at the time.

** John S. Slocum, Colonel 2d Rhode Island Regiment.—Woodbury's Campaign of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment, p. 154. "The Fallen Brave," pp. 81-87.

†† Vide Frank Moore's Rebellion Record.

It is quite sufficient for her glory, that the sons of Rhode Island in this generation, are faithful to the traditions of the State, and loyal in following the example of their fathers.

We are here gathered together in the Halls of the Historical Society of New York, on the anniversary of the landing of Roger Williams, and of the adoption, by Rhode Island, of the Constitution of the United States (at the end of the first year of our association), in State fellowship and in national brotherhood. We have been reviewing a past career of more than two centuries, and gathering up the great lesson of Liberty and Law, of Charity and Truth, of Independence and Toleration, which, under GOD'S PROVIDENCE, has influenced the civilization of the world.

While American citizens, true to the glorious old flag that symbolizes and protects the Union as one nation, yet we are not aliens from our native land. We repudiate *State Sovereignty*, but we cling to STATE FELLOWSHIP.

Yes! Yonder is Rhode Island. Her streams are vocal with the rattling of the spindle; her forges resound the clangor of the anvil; her hills are crowned with the seats of learning; her shores are lined with cottages and with villas; her beach is populous with citizens of all States, in search of health and recreation; her rocks are memorable as the resort of Philosophy and of Poetry; her coast is kissed by the warm touch of the Gulf Stream of the Atlantic; her breath is the genial air of heaven; her bosom is adorned with the emerald grass and the golden corn; her cities are the emporium of industries; her homes the happy sanctuaries of Love, and Liberty, and Contentment.

The Sons of Rhode Island look to her through pleasant memories and with filial hearts. And the citizens of no State love each other more wisely and well, nor cling closer together, "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health," than the native-born people of "THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS."

NOTES.

NOTE I.—PAGE 7.

LETTER OF JOHN MILTON.

THE intimacy of ROGER WILLIAMS with the historic men of his generation, and the lofty hopes of the future grandeur of America, which the bold thinkers of that age cherished, are set forth in the letter of John Milton to Count Palavicini de Saluces, the noble Genoese envoy into England (quoted in "The Piedmontese Envoy," pp. 292-294).

"*My Dear Count* :—You remember my worthy friend Livingstone. * * We spoke of our mutual friend, Mr. Roger Williams, of Rhode Island, a colony in the New World, founded by that noble confessor of religious liberty, who, with many others, fled from tyranny, in the latter part of the reign of Charles I. We rejoiced in the zeal of that extraordinary man, and most enlightened legislator, who, after suffering persecution from his brethren, persevered, amidst incredible hardships and difficulties, in seeking a place of refuge for the sacred ark of conscience. Mr. Livingstone made reference to a tract of land he had bought in that colony just at the beginning of the late conflict, thinking to transport himself thither, if the cause of the Parliament failed. The hand of mercy hath now saved him from the evil to come, by translating him into the kingdom of everlasting peace and joy. It might almost be called a translation, so sudden was the stroke which, in the midst of a green old age, snapped asunder in a moment the golden cord of life. He hath bequeathed to you this tract of land, that thus, as he expresseth himself, 'if you are an alien from your country, and your patrimony, for conscience sake, you may find an inheritance in a land of liberty, and provide an asylum there for your persecuted brethren in Europe.' It is also his desire that you will adopt his name, in addition to your own.

"I expect, my noble friend, that you will not hesitate to seek, in another hemisphere, the prime blessing of man—liberty; since I fear your endeavor to serve this sacred cause, either in France or Italiá, would now, alas! be in vain. Go then, and join the bands of patriots and confessors beyond the broad Atlantic, to whom my spirit looks with hope, as the conservators of those immortal principles which have here been crushed in their bud. The deep-rooted prejudices and selfish ends of the old Governments of Europe, will, I fear, long retard the growth of these principles in this hemisphere; *but, in the Colonies of America, the Allwise Governor of the world seems to have prepared a soil for their further development, and, as I believe, their*

ultimate triumph. In the visions which often cheer my spirit, amidst the darkness of a precious external sense, I behold these little Colonies expanded into great and prosperous Republics, where each man shall possess the fullest measure of civil freedom, and religion, no longer degraded and defiled by her state bondage, will renew her mighty youth and soar in her pristine vigor and glory. In these days may the honored descendants of COUNT DE SALUCES LIVINGSTONE and of ROGER WILLIAMS rejoice in the fruits of their ancestors' principles and labors.

"If I cannot remain in safety in this land, where I am too deeply rooted easily to bear transplantation, I shall, perchance, follow you to the land of HOPE, whither you go.

"Forget not, as you will never be forgotten by, your devoted friend,

"JOHN MILTON."

NOTE II.—PAGE 19.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE CHARTER LEGISLATURE, AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.

THE General Assembly, under the Charter, convened on Monday, May 1, 1843, agreeably to a vote of adjournment passed at the session in January. The session was opened at three o'clock, P. M., by prayer, by the Rev. Francis Vinton, Rector of Trinity Church, Newport. The two Houses, in Grand Committee, then appointed a Special Committee to be present at and witness the organization of the government under the Constitution adopted by the people of the State in November, 1842; and it was resolved "that said Committee make *report*, in conformity to the provision of said Constitution, in order that this General Assembly may know when its functions shall have constitutionally passed into the hands of those who have been legally chosen by the people to receive and exercise the same."

The Grand Committee then adjourned till five o'clock next day, Tuesday, May 2, 1843.

The General Assembly, under the Constitution adopted by the people in November, 1842, convened at the State House, in Newport, on the first Tuesday in May, 1843, at 11 o'clock, A. M. The members of the new Senate and House assembled in separate chambers for the purpose of organizing the government. His Excellency, Samuel Ward King, the last Governor under the Charter of 1663, presided in the organization of the new Senate; and the senior member from the town of Newport, the Hon. Henry Y. Cranston, and the clerks of the old House, acted as officers of the new House, until it was organized. The Secretary of State, the Hon. Henry Bowen, administered the oath prescribed by the Constitution, to the Senators, and afterwards to the members of the House of Representatives. Hon. Alfred Bosworth was the elected Speaker, and Thomas A. Jenckes and Joseph S. Pitman, Clerks. The Governor and Senate then joined the House in Grand Committee, and the session of the General Assembly was then opened by prayer, by the Rev. Francis Vinton.

The votes for general officers were then received, and a committee was appointed to count them.

The Grand Committee then ajourned till five o'clock in the afternoon of the same day. The Grand Committee met at five o'clock, his Excellency, Governor King, in the chair. The committee appointed to count the votes reported, and it was thereupon *Resolved*, that James Fenner be declared elected Governor; Byron Dimon, Lieutenant-Governor; Henry Bowen, Secretary of State; Joseph M. Blake, Attorney-General; and Stephen Cahoon, General Treasurer.

Governor King, who, during this august ceremony, was seated in the identical oaken chair in which, one hundred and eighty years before, Governor Arnold received the Charter of Charles II., from Baxter's hands, resigned his seat to Governor Fenner. Then the Speaker of the House, according to ancient usage, called out: "Sheriff, clear the way; Sergeant, make proclamation that his Excellency, James Fenner, is elected Governor, Captain-General, and Commander-in-chief of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations for the year ensuing." The sheriff, with his mace of office, cleared the way, and the town-sergeant of Newport followed to the balcony of the State House, and made the customary proclamation. After proclaiming the Governor, and the other general officers, the sergeant added the pious deprecation of our forefathers: "God save the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations."

The shouts of the people and the roar of artillery followed the proclamation. A committee was appointed to announce the organization of the new Government, to the General Assembly under the Charter. The two houses then separated. After the adjournment (on Tuesday) of the General Assembly under the Constitution, the General Assembly, under the Charter, convened in Grand Committee, Gov. King in the chair. The committee appointed by the General Assembly, under the Constitution, appeared, and announced that the Government under the new Constitution was legally organized.

The committee appointed by the Charter Assembly, on Monday, to witness the organization of the new government, reported the fact, concluding their report with the declaration that "the power of the government, as organized under the Charter, has ceased." Whereupon, the following resolution was adopted:

"In General Assembly, Tuesday, May 2, 1843.

"*Resolved*, That the foregoing report be accepted, and that this General Assembly be and the same is hereby declared to be dissolved."

The last General Assembly, under the old Charter, which had withstood the vicissitudes of two centuries, ceased to exist.

NOTE III.—PAGE 20.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ROGER WILLIAMS.

ROGER WILLIAMS was a *protégé* of Lord Coke. He was born in Wales, but it is uncertain whether in 1599 or 1606.* Mrs. Sadlier, the daughter of Sir Edward Coke, in a note to one of Roger Williams's letters addressed to herself, wherein he attempts to proselyte her, says: "This Roger Williams, when he was a youth, would, in short hand, take sermons and speeches in the Star Chamber, and present them to my dear father. He, seeing so hopeful a youth, took such a liking to him that he sent him to Sutton's Hospital; full little did he think that he would have proved such a rebel to God, the King, and his country. If ever he has the face to return into his native country, Tyburn may give him welcome." This MSS. letter of Roger Williams to Mrs. Sadlier is in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and is copied in Professor Elton's *Life of Roger Williams*, chapter viii., with other correspondence between them.

The records of Sutton's Hospital, now the "Charter House," show that Roger Williams was elected scholar June 25, 1621, and that he obtained an exhibition July 9, 1624. The records of Jesus College, Oxford, register his matriculation as follows: "*Rogericus Williams, filius Gulielmi Williams, de Conwelgaio, Pleb. an. nat. 18, entered at Jesus College April 30, 1624.* After his graduation, he commenced the study of the law, under Sir Edward Coke. He was afterwards admitted to Holy Orders in the Church of England, and served a parish in Lincolnshire. While there, he became acquainted with Cotton, Dudley, Hutchinson, and the leading friends of the Puritan fathers.† At length, turning Puritan, he embarked, at Bristol, for America, and arrived in Boston, February 5, 1631.

He was banished from Massachusetts, "as a disturber of the peace, both of the Church and Commonwealth," in 1635. In the course of two or three years after the settlement of Providence in 1636, Williams embraced the views of the Baptists. "But," says Professor Elton, "there being no Baptist minister in New England, Ezekiel Holliman, a pious and gifted individual, who afterwards became a minister, was selected to baptize Roger Williams, and Roger Williams then administered the ordinance to Mr. Holliman and ten others."‡ Such was the remarkable origin of the Baptist denomination in America. The Baptist meeting-house in Providence is much venerated by the Baptist people, as the mother of churches. Its first bell rang its laudation. That old bell was made in London, and weighed 2,515 pounds. Upon it was this motto, in rhyme :

"For freedom of conscience the town was first planted;
Persuasion, not force, was used by the people;
This Church is the oldest, and has not recanted;
Enjoying and granting bell, temple, and steeple."§

* Arnold's Hist. of R. I., vol. i., pp. 47-50.

† "It pleased the Lord to call me for some time, and with some persons, to practise the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French, and Dutch. The secretary of the council (Mr. Milton), for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages."—Letter of Roger Williams to John Winthrop.—*Knovles' Memoir of Roger Williams*, p. 264. Also "The Winthrop Papers," in Mass. Hist. Coll.

‡ Elton's *Life of Roger Williams*, p. 145.

§ Hague's Historical Discourse—The Church Transplanted, p. 188. The last line is an allusion to the prohibition of the use, by Dissenters, in England, of steeple or bell.

Roger Williams died in April, 1683, at his residence in Providence, R. I. "He was buried," says Callender, "with all the solemnity the Colony was able to show." "His remains were interred," says Elton, p. 149, "in a spot which he himself had selected on his own land, a short distance from the place where, forty-seven years before, he first set his foot in the wilderness."

In a paper read before the Rhode Island Historical Society, May 18, 1860, Mr. Zachariah Allen has detailed the interesting experiments to identify the grave of Roger Williams. It is curious that an old apple-tree* had spread its roots around his body and absorbed his bones. Has that old apple tree, in despoiling his phosphates, exhausted likewise Rhode Island's pride, and sucked up Rhode Island memories? In 1771 the town of Providence voted "to erect over the grave of the founder of this town and colony a monument."† Where is that monument? Is it not discreditable to the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, that echo answers MEANT! Only "meant," but not done! Is this Rhode Island conduct? No! Sons of Rhode Island, let it *be done*.‡

NOTE IV.—PAGE 21.

LETTER OF WILLIAM J. HOPPIN, ESQ., OF NEW YORK.

REV. DR. F. VINTON:

My Dear Sir:—The taking of the frigate Providence to sea on the 30th of April, 1778, was one of the most brilliant exploits of the war. She was lying in Providence, where she had been built nearly two years before, but as British ships of war were stationed in various parts of the bay, it was almost impossible to go out without being intercepted. It became necessary, however, to send important dispatches to France, probably in relation to the treaty with that nation, the news of which had just arrived here. Captain Whipple determined to run the risk of the blockade, and, by his energy and skill, succeeded in the undertaking. My grandfather, William Jones, afterwards Governor of Rhode Island from 1811 to 1817, commanded the marines on board the Providence, and kept a journal of the cruise, which is in my possession. I send you extracts in relation to this exploit which have never been published:

"On the 30th of April, 1778, at or near high water, at night, we got under way, with the wind at or near N. E., and very thick. Stood down the river, and on the middle ground, a little below Pawtuxet, struck the bar, where we lay perhaps three quarters of an hour until full tide.

* Stephen Randall, Esq., of Rhode Island, a descendant of Roger Williams, showed me the roots of this tree, which followed the form of the skeleton; and the pocket compass of Roger Williams now belonging to Mrs. Harriot Brown, of Providence; also a lineal descendant.

† See Letter of Theodore Foster to Williams Thayer, Jr., in *Rhode Island American* of July 16, 1819, and Knowles' *Memoir of Roger Williams*, pp. 430-432. Also p. 389, "Si Monumentum queris circumspecte." Judge Pitman, in his *Centennial Discourse*, in 1836, eloquently pleads for a monument for "the man who has given us a *name* and a *place*, but has no *place* for his *name* among us," p. 60.

‡ A recent movement has been made, under the auspices of "The Roger Williams Monument Association of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," which was incorporated by act of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, in May, 1860, and was duly organized on the 5th of June, in that year; the Rev. Francis Wayland, D. D., being its first President.

Passed over the bar and shaped our course for Warwick Neck, and before we arrived near Mamcut Point, discovered a signal, by lights, from a tender to the ship Lark, of thirty-two guns, which lay just below Warwick Neck Point to receive us. We kept our course, and very soon received a shot (perhaps of information, as it was at some distance). We, of course, were soon at our quarters—this to effect, however, was not very hard, as we were, in men and boys, only one hundred and fifty-three in number, and many of them at most but *merchantable*. The Lark was a ship of thirty-two guns to our twenty-eight. Her men were picked for the purpose—three hundred in number. Our men were much inferior, a great proportion of them boys, and very few were seamen. We, however, kept our course, during which the Lark, under way, with her foretopsail aback, kept up a scattering fire upon us until nearly alongside, when she gave us a broadside. This civility obliged us to answer, and it was done to effect. By this time, the passage being narrow, we came close in contact, which enabled us to hear the greatest confusion of swearing, etc., I eyer heard; they, however, soon recovered, and gave us a second broadside within talking distance, which was promptly returned; and she, the Lark, was so cut to pieces, and with a number of killed and wounded men, as obliged her to round to, all standing! What a cruel disappointment to a commander who had solicited the station *to take the rebel frigate into Newport*. It afterwards appeared that her tender fared but little better, as she sunk the next day. We proceeded a little farther, when we were saluted with a broadside from the frigate Hound, and two broadsides were exchanged, but her commander, not pleased with Yankee civility, let us alone, and we passed on. It since appeared the Lark had eighteen poor fellows killed and wounded, and was much damaged in sails, rigging, and spars; the Hound not quite so much so; but, through the ever-to-be-adored goodness of Heaven, we had not a man wounded, and but little damage to the ship. We stood on, passed the light-house, the weather extremely thick. In the morning, about daylight, and with, I think, eleven souls on deck (for, as the weather was rough, many of our new sailors were sea-sick, poor creatures), we saw a sail under our lee bow, close or near by. She, it appeared, was a sixty-four gun ship, stationed near Point Judith to take charge of us, if we should escape the two frigates before mentioned—(noble fellows!). We soon had all hands on deck, and made all sail; and the enemy was quite as expeditious; but we had the wind of her. Not a shot was exchanged, each crowding all sail. It soon appeared we gained from her, and by eleven o'clock, A. M., we ran her hull down; and not a little pleased were we, be assured."

The Providence proceeded on her voyage without further difficulty, and on the 30th May, 1778, arrived at Paimbœuf, near Nantes, in France, and Captain Whipple immediately sent Captain Jones with the dispatches to Dr. Franklin, and the other American Commissioners, in Paris.

I think the above account of the exploit of Captain Whipple will be interesting, as it occurred in our own waters, and no particular description of it whatever has appeared, so far as I can learn, in print.

Truly yours,

WILLIAM J. HOPPIN.

878 Broadway, June 23, 1863.

NOTE V.—PAGE 43.

LETTER OF THE HON. HENRY B. ANTHONY.

PROVIDENCE, *October 12, 1863.*

My Dear Sir :—I have yours of the 9th, reminding me of my promise to repeat to you the remark that General Scott made in my hearing about the late Major John R. Vinton. It was at the table of the Hon. Henry S. Sanford, now our minister at Brussels, that the conversation took place, during the last session of the Thirty-sixth Congress. General Scott was giving some account of the siege of Vera Cruz; and in the course of it, said: "John R. Vinton was the most accomplished man in the American Army." I expressed my pleasure at the remark, and said that I had enjoyed the honor of Major Vinton's friendship; and the General repeated it in his peculiarly emphatic style. He also gave an interesting account of the death and burial of Major Vinton.

I think I mentioned to you my doubt about Dr. Vinton's pig story. The pig part of it is true, but not the war part. War was declared in the Senate by a considerable majority. There may have been some preliminary question decided by one majority, but I do not remember what it was. General Hickey, the principal clerk of the Senate, could settle the question.

I do not remember that Dr. Vinton, in his learned and delightful discourse, included Jemima Wilkinson among the characters of Rhode Island.

Very truly yours,

HENRY B. ANTHONY.

HENRY T. DROWNE, Esq., New York.

NOTE VI.—PAGE 44.

LETTER OF GEORGE C. ARNOLD, ESQ.

PROVIDENCE, *May 28, 1863.*

Dear Sir :—I am in receipt of yours of yesterday. James Rhodes, of Providence, in 1811, or about that time, owned a farm in Cranston, a few rods over the city line, and lived there during the summer months. On a hot day in July, he discovered a pig in his "clover meadow." He called his son and my brother (Mr. William H. Arnold, now of Warwick), who, with a dog, after a good run, drove the pig into the barn-yard, where he soon after died with over heat.

Mr. Perry, the owner of the pig, demanded damages. Rhodes refused. Perry commenced a suit. James Burrill, his attorney, said many hard things against Rhodes, and finally defeated him. Rhodes had to pay damages, costs, etc.

Judge Mathewson, of Scituate, a member of the General Assembly for many years, a true and intimate friend of Rhodes, made it his home there when in the city. He was, and had been for years, a leading man in the Federal party in the State, and had always voted for Burrill. But James

Rhodes told Mathewson not, on any account, to vote for Burrill, if he had any desire to preserve their friendship. Mathewson made no promise ; but, when the vote was put, voted for Jeremiah B. Howell. This made a tie vote, when the chairman, Governor James Fenner, voted for Howell, who was, accordingly, elected Senator to Congress.

In Washington, Jeremiah B. Howell voted for war with England, which made a tie vote ; and the chairman decided for war with England.

This is the story, as I always understood it. At any rate, if James Burrill had received Mathewson's vote he would have been elected, and there would not have been a tie vote. Burrill would have voted for peace, but Howell voted for war. And had it not been for the pig, Mathewson would have voted, of course, for Burrill. Yours truly,

GEORGE C. ARNOLD.

TO HENRY T. DROWNE, New York.

NOTE VII.—PAGE 50.

BISHOP BURGESS' POEM ON RHODE ISLAND, IN 1842.

O gallant land of bosoms true,
Still bear that stainless shield !
That anchor clung the tempest through ;
That hope, untaught to yield !
Fair city, "all thy banners wave,"
And high thy trumpet sound !
The name thy righteous father gave,
Still guards thee round and round.

No thirst for war's wild joy was thine,
Nor flashed one hireling sword :
Forth, for their own dear household shrine,
The patriot yeomen poured ;
There, rank to rank, like brethren stood,
One soul, and step, and hand ;
And crushed the stranger's robber-brood,
And kept their father's land.

High hung the rusting scythe awhile,
And ceased the spindle's roar,
The boat rocked idly by the isle,
And on the ocean shore ;
The belted burgher paced his street ;
The seaman wheeled his gun ;
Steel gleamed along the ruler's seat,
And study's task was done !

Old Narragansett rang with arms,
And rang the silver bay,
And that sweet shore whose girdled charms
Were Philip's ancient sway ;

And our old island's halcyon scene
 The black artillery sent;
 And answered, from the home of Greene,
 The men of dauntless Kent!

Can freedom's truth endure the shock
 That comes in freedom's name?
 Rhode Island, like a Spartan rock,
 Upheld her country's fame!
 The land that first threw wide its gates,
 And gave the exile rest,
 First arms to save the strength of States,
 And guards her freedom best.

Oh, ever thus, dear land of ours,
 Be nurse of steadfast men!
 So firmer far than hills and towers
 Or rocky pass and glen!
 For peace alone, to dare the fight;
 The soldier for the laws;
 Thine anchor fast in heavenly might;
 Thy hope, an holy cause!

Providence Journal, July 15, 1842.

NOTE VIII.—PAGE 51.

LETTER OF HIS EXCELLENCY, WILLIAM SPRAGUE, LATE GOVERNOR, BUT NOW
 UNITED STATES SENATOR, OF RHODE ISLAND.

PROVIDENCE, *June 6, 1862.*

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, Esq., *Corresponding Secretary, Association Sons
 Rhode Island, New York.*

My Dear Sir:—I duly received your kind favor 29th ult., informing me
 that at the first meeting of the Executive Committee of your Association I
 was elected an Honorary Member.

I am highly gratified with this compliment. Will you please present to
 the Committee my profound acknowledgments.

The delay in answering your note was in consequence of my absence
 from Rhode Island with two regiments of Infantry and one battery of Light
 Artillery, collected together directly from the people at one day's notice.

Having no efficient State organization to draw from, or to embarrass
 prompt action, our people, unaided and by themselves, have learned the
 spirit and duties of the soldier. So numerous a response at so short notice
 from so limited a number of people, is, in my opinion, unprecedented in
 the history of any country, they having at the same time double their quota
 in the national service.

This, you will perceive, is another contribution of Rhode Island's loyalty
 and patriotism in aid of a government menaced by men who would destroy
 all liberty—all law, country and people, to establish a bastard empire.

God preserve us from such a curse, is the constant prayer of your obliged
 fellow-countryman, and obedient servant,

WILLIAM SPRAGUE.

NOTE IX.—PAGE 51.

THE THREE TELEGRAMS, FROM THE NEW YORK COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER, SHOWING THE STATE OF THE PUBLIC MIND IN THE SEVERAL CITIES, IN RELATION TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE PRESENT CIVIL REBELLION.

WAR NEWS IN OTHER CITIES.

WASHINGTON, Saturday, *April* 13, 1861.

The war news is received here with deep feelings of regret. There is no excitement, but the prospects of the future create a general feeling of depression.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Saturday, *April* 13, 1861.

Governor Sprague has tendered to the Government the services of the Marine Artillery,* and one thousand infantry, and offers to accompany them himself.

BOSTON, Saturday, *April* 13, 1861.

The war news from Charleston creates a profound sensation in this city, and throughout the State. The general sentiment is, that the Federal Government is right, and shall be sustained.

* Battery of Light Artillery. "This was the first battery of rifled cannon in the service of the United States, either volunteer or regular."—WOODBURY'S *"Campaign of the First Rhode Island Regiment,"* p. 173, note.

NOTE X.—PAGE 51.

RATIO OF SOLDIERS TO POPULATION.

The following table shows the ratio of the number of soldiers furnished thus far by each State, to the population of the State. In Kansas, it would appear that one fourth of the entire male population has gone to the war. The States are arranged in the order of their ratio :

A. D. 1861-1863.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Kansas..... | 1 to 7.30 | Massachusetts..... | 1 to 17.06 |
| Rhode Island..... | 1 to 11.10 | New York..... | 1 to 17.53 |
| Illinois..... | 1 to 12.63 | New Hampshire..... | 1 to 17.86 |
| Indiana..... | 1 to 13.15 | Wisconsin..... | 1 to 18.23 |
| Ohio..... | 1 to 13.15 | Kentucky..... | 1 to 20.29 |
| Iowa..... | 1 to 13.59 | Maine..... | 1 to 20.24 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 1 to 14.54 | New Jersey..... | 1 to 22.40 |
| Minnesota..... | 1 to 14.65 | Delaware..... | 1 to 21.44 |
| Michigan..... | 1 to 15.61 | Missouri..... | 1 to 31.02 |
| Connecticut..... | 1 to 16.12 | Oregon..... | 1 to 51.56 |
| Vermont..... | 1 to 16.58 | California..... | 1 to 54.35 |
| Western Virginia..... | 1 to 16.75 | Maryland..... | 1 to 63.70 |

NOTE XI.—PAGE 51.

REMINISCENCES OF THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND IN NEW YORK.

The First Rhode Island Regiment, commanded by Col. Ambrose E. Burnside, and accompanied by Governor Sprague and staff, arrived at New York, *en route* for the defence of Washington, in the steamer *Empire State*, on Sunday morning, April 21st, 1861. They were visited during the day by many of the sons of Rhode Island residing in the city and vicinity; and among the first was the Rev. Dr. Francis Vinton, of Trinity Church, New York, whose friendly greetings and patriotic counsels were warmly received by officers and men. As the Regiment left the pier, at the foot of Canal street, North River, late in the afternoon, on board the transport *Coatzacoalcas*, patriotic speeches were made by the Governor and others, as also enthusiastic cheers exchanged between the sons of Rhode Island, on board and on shore.

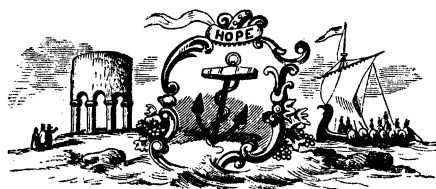
Another incident afterwards, on March 29th, 1862, called together the sons of Rhode Island in New York, when the bodies of some of her lamented dead—the gallant SLOCUM, BALLOU, and TOWER, who fell in the first battle of Bull Run—were borne through the city. This led to the organization of THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND as a permanent association. On the day of the public obsequies, a meeting was held at the Astor House, and a committee appointed, consisting of John H. Ormsbee, Benjamin G. Arnold, Charles Congdon, Henry Jacobs, Henry T. Drowné, Dr. Francis Vinton, and Randall H. Greene, to draft the Constitution, which was adopted May 23d, 1862.

The Association at present numbers upwards of one hundred resident Rhode Islanders, and has enrolled as its Honorary Members

WILLIAM SPRAGUE,
SAMUEL G. ARNOLD,
GEORGE H. CALVERT,
HENRY B. ANTHONY,

GEORGE BANCROFT,
WILLIAM R. STAPLES,
JOHN RUSSELL BARTLETT,
USHER PARSONS.





A RHYME
OF
RHODE ISLAND AND THE TIMES:

PRONOUNCED BEFORE

THE SONS OF RHODE ISLAND IN NEW YORK,

AT THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY,

HELD IN THE

Hall of the New York Historical Society,

MAY 29, 1863,

BY GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

DELIVERED, ALSO,

In Brooklyn, N. Y., before the Long Island Historical Society, June 11, 1863.

To the Citizens of Providence, R. I., in Roger Williams' Hall, June 26, 1863.

To the Redwood Library Association, Newport, R. I., in Aquidneck Hall, June 30, 1863.

THE RHYME.

Sons of Rhode Island ! how could I refuse
At *your* command to woo the unwilling Muse?
To me unwilling, for she knows that I
To climb Parnassus' steep no longer try ;
That my accounts with Helicon are closed,
And I for many a year have only prosed.

Yet had I said what dear Rhode Island knows,
Seed sown on barren places never grows ;
If I had stopped to doubt, delay, demur,
You would have said, "*he* 's no Rhode Islander."
Therefore, if you had bade me think in Greek,
Or plant our flag on Dhawalagiri's peak ;
To sail through Symmes's hole, or straightway lay
An undisputed railroad in Broadway ;
If you had ordered me to keep gold steady,
Or for this night to have an epic ready ;
To think Rhode Island's record could be straighter,
Or that Vallandigham is not a traitor ;
Or to call *him* a Union man, indeed,
Who wished the Empire City to secede ;
A kind of Unionist by small Brooks bred,
A *Wood-en* body and a *copper-head* ;

If you had told me that I must believe
The London *Times* would o'er our ruin grieve ;
Whose correspondent weekly writes to say,
" This sick man won't survive another day,"
And, winking to John Bull, keeps gayly humming,
" There's a good time coming, John, a good time coming ;"
Or, if still harder tasks your will requires,
Tell me to find by yonder bright camp-fires
One son of Greene who in the crashing fray
Knows how to yield or how to run away ;
Or one of Hopkins' brothers on the sea
Where heart does not compel the victory.
Tell me from out my heart to raze each name
That consecrates anew Rhode Island's fame,
Or find upon the globe another State
In soil so little and in soul so great ;
Or in a wilder fit of pure caprice,
Should some one sigh at any price for peace,
And ask me for peace arguments in song
As good as Grierson's or half as long,
Or likely to convert our rebel kith
Like those that General Gillmore argues with,
Or bid me name, if such a man they want,
A better peace man than Ulysses Grant,
Who says with emphasis that never ceases
If you want peace then knock your foe in pieces.—
However hopeless any task might be
That Narragansett wisdom laid on me,
This, though despairing, should be my reply,
" Sons of Rhode Island, I, at least, will try."

But no such serious duty falls on me,
You only ask a sound of minstrelsy ;
A little singing after sober sense ;
A little jingling after eloquence.

Indeed, the duty you invite me to
 Is what all honest men would gladly do :
 For if his hands were large as his desire,
 Who would not strike—yes, and knock down, the lyre.
 I wish all lyres were struck,—then should not we
 The sport of special correspondents be ;
 Nor they alone,—for though we've heard it said
 Baron Munchausen long ago was dead,
 Who does not know,—alas, 'tis true, 'tis pity,
 He edits every paper in the city.

Do you upbraid me that my idle rhymes
 Jar on the solemn measure of the times ?
 Do you reprove the wanton mind that strays
 From the continuous dirges of these days ?
 Nay, friends and brothers, at this moment, we
 Think the same thoughts and the same visions see.
 Admonished by life's fluctuating scene
 Of all he is and all he might have been,—
 Man toiling upward on the dizzy track,
 Still looks regretful or remorseful back,
 Paces old paths, remembering vows that rolled
 In burning words from lips forever cold,—
 Bows his sad head where once he bowed the knee,
 And kissed the cheek that no more kissed shall be.
 So the sad traveller climbing from the plain,
 Turns from the hill and sees his home again,
 And sighs to know that, that sweet prospect o'er,
 The boundless world is but a foreign shore.

Thus, dear Rhode Island, on thy shrine to-day
 Thy children pausing hang this votive lay ;
 No other song upon their lips shall be,
 For it is music to remember thee.

Though far our feet have wandered since they played
Beneath the trees that thy green meadows shade,—
Though many a wave has wet our lips since first
At Roger Williams' spring we quenched our thirst,—
Though we have seen with fascinated eye,
The Syrian shore and the Italian sky,—
Yet such the magic that in memory dwells,
Such the soft hue that o'er the distance swells,
That not in Asian valleys could we view
A fairer landscape than our childhood knew ;
Nor in the deep Sorrento heaven find
A tenderer beauty than we left behind.
Though we have stood by classic Tiber's side,
And watched the darkly rolling Danube glide,—
Or that benignant Bacchus, Father Rhine,
Reel seaward garlanded with endless vine,—
Or farther, broader, grander, the bright smile
On Africa's dark face of her calm Nile,—
Yet dearer to our hearts the smiles that play
On thy bright waters, Narragansett Bay!

Nor these alone, but eager memory pours
Poetic light on other streams and shores,
Thermopylæ, heroic Marathon,
Fields where the prizes of the world were won.
And wandering beneath the happy sky
Where art triumphant piles its trophies high,
In that pure clime where, ruined though it be,
The Parthenon still smiles across the sea;
And every moon the traveller looks upon
Herself Dian wakes him Endymion,—
From the rich dust of the Ægean shore,
Waked by our longing, Greece revived once more ;
Mercurial France we saw, whose rivers flow
Through sunny vineyards and by old chateaux.

Vainest of nations! yet its greatest joy
 Not its own child, but an Italian boy;
 Home of the Graces, who, with pouting mouth,
 Jeered at the Muses who preferred the South.
 Shrewdest of Savans! most decorous Sinner,
 Ready for your dissection or your dinner,—
 With witty lip and calculating heart,
 Academy of sciences and art.
 But vain its colleges and wit and schools!
 Once more in France a silent despot rules,
 The nobler France, with melancholy eyes,
 Sees the strange pageant played beneath the skies,
 Sees, as in some grotesquest fever dream,
 A wild adventurer seizing power supreme,
 And murdering Frenchmen till his terrors cease,
 Then gravely dubbing his frail empire “peace;”
 While the gay cock that froze in Russian snow,
 Burns his clipped wings in torrid Mexico,
 And nobler France dishonored hangs its head,
 Its master perjured, and its heroes fled.

And we have crossed to that delightful isle
 Where dwells a gentle people without guile,
 Modest and mild, unselfish and polite,
 A race in whom all noble traits unite:
 A frugal people doing good by *stealth*,
 Disdaining empire and despising wealth;
 The Dollar worship gives them huge offence,
 For all their piety is pounds and pence.

They chide the wars of others, for they know
 No civil broils their virtuous annals show.
 They never fought for conquest or for gain,
 Their sternest song is a bucolic strain.
 They never rammed with supercilious cant
 Down China's throat what China did not want.

From blasting cannon's mouth they never blew
The hopeless, helpless, ignorant Hindoo,—
Nor on the bleak Crimean hills engaged
In the most needless war men ever waged.

Hail, great John Bull! warm, generous, sincere!
Pious and just, to all the virtues dear!
All nations love you, John, 'tis sweet to see,
That in their view of you they all agree,—
But their affection to express most fully,
Bull is too cold, and so they call you bully!
Your neighbors love you! from the earliest day,
France doated on her dear "god-dam Anglais."
Erin, whose years in prosperous progress glide,
Sits fat, content, and happy at your side,
While shaggy Russia sucks her ursine paws,
And watching her dear friend, unsheathes her claws.

Well, moral John, since your loud mouth declares
That you are corn and other people tares,—
Since you delight your portly form to draw
As champion of Liberty and Law,
Faithful to friends, to foes a fearful fellow,—
Cease, for a moment, your tremendous bellow,
And tell us why, when trampling on the law,
A band of desperate men their weapons draw,
Pleading no cause but that it suits them well
To turn their country into very hell,
That they may have the unrestricted pleasure
Of selling men and babies at their leisure,—
Contending that the Constitution meant
They might whip women to their hearts' content,
And everywhere this must be guaranteed,
And for all time, or else they would secede,
While this God-given privilege to gain
They'd pile the land with heaps of brothers slain,—

Why at that moment, friend of freedom, why
 To Liberty one word did you deny?
 Champion of justice, why did you decide,
 To take the wretched women-whippers' side?
 And when a friend was struggling with both hands
 Against the onset of assassin bands,
 Why did you snivel that in your opinion,
 Your friend was fighting only for dominion,—
 Sharpen your nails, and cry, "though I may rue it,
 I'll scratch his back, and now's the time to do it,—"
 Why did you sneer so sourly that you knew
 We'd undertaken what we could not do?
 And smile contemptuous, as you shook your head,
 "Kicking's no use, for you're as good as dead?"
 Had mountains swelled or oceans rolled between,
 If separating deserts there had been,
 If any natural barrier indeed,
 We might have said, "in God's name *do* secede."
 It could not be, no force the State can sever,
 God made us one, God keeps us one forever;
 Union's an instinct, John, and so you see
 Disunion cannot, will not, shall not be!

Beloved Bull, you tossed your angry horn
 With such a lofty roar of moral scorn,
 We knew you meant some special mischief, and
 We saw you stretching out a stealthy hand
 To seize, and burn, and ravage eagerly,
 A friendly nation's helpless ships at sea,
 Declaring, as you loosed your pirates on her,
 That British law could not save British honor.
 Once in our Senate, John, a stealthy blow
 From a dull ruffian laid a good man low.
 The country shuddered; every man from far
 Scented the hideous breath of civil war.—

The deed was fearful, and yet History
 A sadder sight in your record will see ;
 For ever in your Parliament there stands
 A British Senator who says, "these hands,
 British Lawgivers, broke and break your laws,"
 And seats himself 'mid England's loud applause.

Why is all this ; Beloved of nations, why ?
 Though WE might answer, what is *your* reply ?
 Why, friend of law, do you its soldiers slander ?
 Why, Freedom's Champion, are you slavery's pander ?
 At least be manly. Since we know why,—speak !
 If you are false, why also be a sneak ?
 Could you for once with your fine moral air,
 Could you for once be honest, frank, and fair ?
 John Toodles Bull ! we know your ancient whine—
 "I *reely* can't ; it isn't in my line."

But, better England ! our indignant rhymes
 Do not confound you with the London *Times*,
 England of Bright and Cobden, Cairnes and Mill,
 You are the England of John Milton still.
 Sir Roundell Palmer quibbles ; Palmerston
 Sneers at an ally in his smartest tone,
 The little Lords make merry at our name,
 And mark with rebel badges their own shame,
 Their loud applauses pirate bands inspire,
 That waste the sea and light their course with fire,
 But, nobler Britons ! still to justice true,
 From gross and dull John Bull, we turn to you.
 O, toiling hands ! O, sympathetic hearts !
 Our love from you no rolling ocean parts,
 Through every cloud the mighty truth you see,
 We fight the battle of your Liberty.

When in our fields the holy war shall cease,
 And from its sacred blood spring perfect peace,
 No tyranny can then hope to endure,
 No rank or privilege will be secure.
 Then the full splendor of that flag unfurled,
 Will light with all its meaning all the world;
 The meteor flag of caste will droop and fall,
 God and the people will be all in all.

These have we seen, and yet, Rhode Island, we
 Would not exchange the fairest land for thee.
 Thy vines are few; thy Alps are very low;
 In thy judicious soil no almonds grow;
 On thy green shores when grateful olives shine,
 They're wisely pickled in a foreign brine;
 If "Torno's cliff and Pambamarca's side"
 Thy gentle undulations should deride,
 Philip's Mount Hope thou hast for solace still,
 And thou hast what is left of old Smith's Hill.
 If Marathon, Marengo, Waterloo,
 Should ask thy famed historic fields to view,
 Show them, Rhode Island, with a high disdain,
 Thy Dexter training-ground, and Seekonk plain.
 If proud cathedrals in their Gothic style,
 Pronounce Rhode Island architecture vile,
 Calmly reply, "'tis true we have no great house,
 But we've a Baptist Church, a Newport State house."
 And when some Frenchman, pert and débonnaire,
 Asks to inspect Rhode Island's bill of fare,
 Since all his pride upon a frog's legs leans,
 Show him a dish of John B. Chace's beans.
 The case of one who boasts of British prog
 Treat with a firm, but delicate tautog,
 And if his boasting louder grows, and louder,
 Stop his broad mouth with green corn and a chowder.

Rhode Island geese!—kind friends, it is not you,
Nor I, who need their praises to pursue ;—
Nor will I hint that any listener here
Was e'er laid out on Carpenter's spruce beer.

We are thy sons, Rhode Island, and we know
Why all thy children love their mother so ;
Thy form is slight, but we remember well
The tale thy ancient gossips love to tell,—
How when a statesman, to deride thy size,
Asked a Rhode Island girl, with laughing eyes,
How many square feet in the State might be,—
Her ready lips responded instantly :
“ In our beloved Rhode Island, sir,” she said—
“ Not by the foot we measure, but the head.”

Or better still, a story of the day,
How when, last year, our troops near Yorktown lay,
A young Rhode Island picket, on the hill,
Heard from the enemy the summons shrill,
“ And to what regiment do *you* belong ?”—
Promptly his answer echoed clear and strong,
“ The hundred fourth Rhode Island,”—for he knew
That what he said was of her spirit true ;
The little mother, by instinctive art,
Not by the head *he* measured, but the heart.

And still again ; of late the laborers found
Near Newport an old Indian burial ground.
Uninjured in the grave the relics lay,
The bodies buried in the white man's way ;
But, wondering, the explorers saw in spots,
Some heads were cased in solid copper pots.

'Tis strange that human beings any where,
 For their last night-caps copper pots should wear ;
 That they, as 'twere, in their deep graves should be
 So copper bound for all eternity :—
 But stranger, that live men should be such sots
 As to plunge *their* heads into copper pots—
 Seeing not, hearing not ; but butting blind
 At every thing they find or *think* they find,
 Trying to prove to every man and woman,
 That copper heads are better than the human.
 These Newport relics show us what we knew,
 Rhode Island to the *human* head is true ;
 And the last *copperhead* her soil below
 She buried deep, two hundred years ago.

O native State ! thy praises while we sing,
 Through our light song the shouts of battle ring ;
 On our bowed hearts the blows of battle fall,—
 And in each blow we hear our country call,
 So while on thee our lavish praise we pour,
 We love thee much,—but love our country more.
 All that we are and have, how well we know,
 Our native land ! to thee thy children owe.
 And since each State, as prospering it stands,
 Draws its importance from thy fostering hands ;
 Since in the nation's doubtful, threatening hour,
 There is but one supreme, one sovereign power ;
 This the chief glory of our State shall be,
 Rhode Island taught us how to honor thee.
 For when assassins, skulking on thy track,
 Fawned in thy face, and stabbed thee in the back,
 While all thy children heard the startling cry,
 Rhode Island answered first : “ Lo ! here am I.”
 For, by her founder's hand, the little State
 To every liberty was dedicate ;

And in the ardent van of human rights
 Old Roger Williams naturally fights.
 Through the loud tempest of the mighty strife,
 Where, undismayed, the country strikes for life,
 I hear his joyous summons pealing clear
 Across the stormy field, "What cheer! What cheer?"
 And from each quarter echoing through the sky
 Perry's proud music gives the glad reply,—
 "The fight is sharp, but the foe plainly cowers,
 We've met the enemy and they *are ours*."

We've met the enemy, but on the field
 Lie the brave boys who died, but could not yield.
 Rhode Island boys! you only march before,
 Your tents are pitched upon the heavenly shore;
 And never earthly storm or battle rain
 On your young sacred heads shall beat again.
 Beloved and blessed! the unextinguished fire
 That warmed your hearts, our hearts shall still inspire:
 Your victory won, your perfect peace secure,
 Your glory with your country's shall endure.

And brothers, you who in the fight still stand,
 Battling for liberty and native land,
 While down your ranks peals Perry's bugle note,
 Above your heads two sacred banners float:
 On one the anchor, firm 'mid hissing seas,*
 Holds by the centre till the storm shall cease—
 A flag above it hangs, the colors of the Mother
 Our fathers knew, and we will know no other.
 Our best beloved, our pride of song and story,
 God save the stars and stripes, our common glory!
 Lift up your eyes, Rhode Island soldiers, see!
 Our State says "Hope," our country "Liberty!"

* The device upon the flag of the State of Rhode Island is an anchor, with the inscription "Hope."

At last, at last, each glowing star,
In that pure field of heavenly blue,
On every people shining far,
Burns, to its utmost promise true.

Hopes in our fathers' hearts that stirred,
Justice, the seal of peace, long scorned,
O perfect peace ! too long deferred,
At last, at last, your day has dawned.

Your day has dawned, but many an hour
Of storm and cloud, of doubt and tears,
Across the eternal sky must lower,
Before the glorious noon appears.

And not for us that noontide glow,
For us the strife and toil shall be,
But welcome toil, for now we know,
Our children shall that glory see.

At last, at last ! O, stars and stripes,
Touched in your birth by Freedom's flame !
Your purifying lightning wipes
Out from our history its shame.

Stand to your faith, America !
Sad Europe, listen to our call !
Up to your manhood, Africa !
That gracious flag floats over all.

And when the hour seems dark with doom,
Our sacred banner lifted higher,
Shall flash away the gathering gloom
With inextinguishable fire.

Pure as its white the future see !
Bright as its red is now the sky !
Fixed as its stars the faith shall be,
That nerves our hands to do or die.

